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Face-off in Florence

At the Seventh Annual International AIDS Conference, ACT UP calls for the cancellation of next year's event unless discriminatory U.S. travel and immigration restrictions are lifted. Scientists charge the activists with disrupting the exchange of ideas

By Jacob Smith Yang

FLORENCE, Italy—Members of ACT UP zapped a news conference at the Seventh Annual International AIDS Conference on June 19. At issue was whether the organizers would cancel next year's conference in Boston should the U.S. fail to rescind its policy of prohibiting HIV-positive immigrants and visitors from entering the country.

Members of ACT UP/New York said the news conference zap helped prod conference organizers to announce two days later that, should the immigration ban be in place Aug. 2, next year's conference will not be held in the United States. Some conference participants, however, maintain that ACT UP's disruption was counterproductive.

"Members of ACT UP at the conference seemed to lose sight of the fact that their friends are people doing AIDS research and trying to change U.S. policy," said Julie Rioux of the AIDS and Reproductive Health Network at the Harvard School of Public Health. "Their demonstration at the press conference seemed to serve the Bush administration more that it served to get the immigration ban lifted," she said.

Throughout the conference—which was attended by approximately 9,100 scientists, researchers, health care workers, AIDS advocates and people with AIDS/HIV—the U.S. was denounced for its immigration and travel restrictions on people with AIDS/HIV. According to Dana Van Gorder, community liaison for next year's event, the purpose of the news conference was for scientists to present a united front in denouncing the restrictions.

'Acting out'

Scheduled to speak at the press conference were such mainstream AIDS luminaries as Jonas Salk, Paul Volberding, June Osborne, Mathilde Krim, Johnathan Mann and Max Essex, chairperson of next year's AIDS conference. Shortly after it began, however, 20 members of ACT UP marched to the front of the room with signs that read "Ban Boston." They then disrupted panelists' attempts to answer questions by chanting "Shut it down!" and "Cancel it now!"

"ACT UP started harassing the panelists, especially Dr. Max Essex and Paul Volberding," said Rioux, who attended the press conference. Rioux told *GCN* that "Max said he was not prepared to make a statement about next year's conference, but ACT UP kept pressing him and yelling. Many people feel that ACT UP completely undermined the message the scientists were trying to deliver

to the public. What people ended up seeing was a bunch of screaming twenty-year-olds acting out, acting like kids."

Van Gorder said that it was frustrating to have the press conference disrupted since its goal was to send a "targeted message" to the Bush administration advocating a liberalization of immigration policy. "The issue of the conference's future," he said, "should and would have been dealt with outside that forum. There were a variety of internal opinions as to whether we should cancel the conference if the bans on both short-term travel and immigration stood."

Members of ACT UP said they feared that organizers might decide to hold the conference in Boston under circumstances similar to those of last year's conference in San Francisco. At that conference, the U.S. government temporarily lifted the travel ban on foreign visitors with HIV, while maintaining its permanent immigration ban. (See *GCN*, Vol. 17, No. 48).

In a prepared statement, ACT UP reiterated its fear that AIDS conference organizers "may walk away from their previous commitment to move or cancel the conference and may go ahead with their intention to host the conference in the United States. This is unacceptable."

Common ground sought

Van Gorder told *GCN* that the day after the news conference, organizers met and tried to formulate a position on next year's conference. After the meeting, in an attempt to unite conference organizers and activists, Van Gorder said he "went to ACT UP and asked for an agreement that said we were prepared to cancel the conference but needed until July 8 to decide."

Van Gorder said that ACT UP members in Florence then met and ratified the agreement. By the end of the next day, he said, "owing to a lot of discussion, internally and with various groups, we came to the decision that Dr. Essex announced in his closing speech." In that speech, Essex announced, "There will be no conference in Boston unless all American travel and immigration restrictions against HIV-infected people are lifted by August 3rd."

Van Gorder said that while organizers are examining the possibility of alternative conference sites, primary efforts are being focused on getting the immigration and travel bans rescinded. He added that conference organizers at the Harvard AIDS Institute have hired lobbyists in Washington to work against the current immigration policy.

In his speech, Essex said he was

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'BETTY perks a dyke gal up'

Pride Day role delays Air Force captain's discharge

Gay officer enlists support of mainstream media and Congress to win honorable discharge from Air Force

By John Zeh

WASHINGTON—A U.S. Air Force captain won an honorable discharge following a headline-grabbing military interrogation prompted by the captain's participation in the city's gay and lesbian pride march.

Capt. Greg Greeley led the march on June 23, one day before he was to be honorably discharged after four years of military service. A reporter from the *Washington Post* interviewed Greeley, and the *Post* printed the story the next morning. In it, Greeley was quoted as saying, "This is our time.... We came out in the daylight and not [to] be in some dim bar. This is our day. I feel very proud."

Just hours after the story appeared, Greeley was informed that his discharge was being postponed, and he was summoned to the Office of Special Investigation at Bolling Air Force Base. While at Bolling, military officials questioned Greeley about his personal life, citing the possibility of jeopardized military intelligence. Greeley held high security clearances.

"They asked me who I had slept with... if anyone else in the Air Force that I know is gay," Greeley said. After refusing to answer officers' queries, they "said since I was not being cooperative, they would have to expand the investigation; but that if I cooperated, they would grant me immunity."

According to Jack Giese, a Pentagon public information officer, the actions were taken because it "is the policy of the Department of Defense that homosexuality is basically incompatible with military service."

The same day, Greeley began contacting gay and lesbian organizations, journalists and members of Congress to formulate a defense. As a result, the *Washington Post* ran a front-page story on June 25 with the headline "Gay Parade Leader Questioned: Air Force Holds Up Captain's Discharge." Timothy McFeeley, director of the Washington-based Human Rights Campaign Fund (HRCF), faxed a letter to the Defense Department, demanding

it immediately stop its "harassment" of Greeley. In the letter, McFeeley stressed the significance of a recent HRCF poll showing that more than 80 percent of U.S. citizens oppose the Pentagon's discriminatory policies toward homosexuals.

With a swiftness that is rare on Capitol Hill, two Massachusetts Democratic Representatives, Joseph Kennedy and Gerry Studds, issued public condemnations of the Defense Department. Late in the day, before television cameras, Kennedy spoke from the House floor, decrying the Air Force's treatment of Greeley as a "witchhunt" that "failed any test of logic or common sense." "There has never been any evidence that Greeley was ever less than courteous or served his country less than admirably," Kennedy said angrily. "The fact that he is gay does not change that." Studds, who is openly gay, telephoned the Pentagon and wrote a letter of protest to Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney. The letter was approved by 40 of Studds' colleagues in the House.

Prior to a 1p.m. meeting with the media, Greeley called the Air Force's press office to ensure his talking to the press would not violate military procedures. The press liaison then told Greeley she had just heard his honorable discharge had been approved. Greeley said he then "walked into my director's office who called the chain of command." An unidentified higher-up confirmed the discharge had been issued.

The power of publicity

Greeley credits the story in the *Washington Post* for his victory. According to the HRCF's Gregory King, when "something appears on the front page of the *Post*, it creates a great deal of interest in the Pentagon and in the population at large." King believes Greeley's fight and the publicity it generated will benefit the gay and lesbian community in the long run. "The incident...has gotten the issue of gays in the military on the front page of one of America's most important newspapers for the first time ever. I think this will help us

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NEWSNOTES

Prisoners' rights eroded

WASHINGTON—Continuing its pattern of limiting prisoners' rights, the Supreme Court ruled June 17 that prisoners seeking to end inhumane prison conditions must prove that prison officials deliberately allowed such conditions to exist.

Writing the majority opinion in the 5-4 decision, Justice Antonin Scalia stated that the U.S. Constitution does not protect prisoners from uncomfortable or unsanitary prisons. According to the *Boston Globe*, Scalia said that overcrowding, poor hygienic conditions and housing physically and mentally ill prisoners together with other prisoners do not violate the Eighth Amendment's ban on cruel and unusual punishment.

Scalia wrote that a prisoner challenging prison conditions must prove that prison officials acted with "deliberate indifference" and purposefully allowed poor care to take place. Scalia was joined in the majority opinion of *Wilson v. Seiter* by Justices William Rehnquist, Sandra Day O'Connor, Anthony Kennedy and David Souter.

In a dissenting opinion, Justice Byron White said that the ruling will severely infringe upon other court challenges to prison conditions, because officials will be able to say that unfit conditions are caused by lack of state funding rather than by deliberate indifference on their part.

White wrote that proving intent will also be nearly impossible. "In truth," he stated, "intent simply is not very meaningful when considering a challenge to an institution, such as a prison system."

White further said that the majority ruling disregards earlier decisions that viewed prison conditions themselves as a form of penalty and thus subject to Eighth Amendment cruel and unusual punishment prohibitions.

White's dissent was joined by Justices Thurgood Marshall, Harry Blackmun and John Paul Stevens.

—Elizabeth Yukins

Cleve Jones to run for state legislature

SAN FRANCISCO—Cleve Jones, founder of the NAMES Project, which sponsors the AIDS memorial quilt, announced June 5 that he will run for a seat representing San Francisco's 16th District in the California Legislature.

According to the *Bay Area Reporter*, Jones said he is running in the Democratic primary because the Assembly has failed to address issues of importance to the 16th District.

"The Legislature is lacking a sense of urgency," Jones said. "All of us are frustrated at the 'business-as-usual attitude' in Sacramento."

Among the issues Jones cited as requiring immediate attention from California legislators were the financially troubled public school system, the rate of HIV infection, wide-spread homelessness and street violence.

Jones, whose work has focused on the HIV/AIDS epidemic for the past 10 years, said that the epidemic has brought long-standing problems in the gay community to the forefront. Specifically, he pointed to access to health care and insurance.

"We need a seat at the table," Jones said, noting that there are no openly gay members of the state assembly. "This is not a campaign about an individual's sexual orientation," he said, "but it is about our community's aspirations."

The planned reapportionment of California's electoral districts means Jones will not know exactly how the 16th District will be configured. Calling the present district lines "appalling," Jones said he fears the reapportionment will pit San Francisco's ethnic minorities against one another. He urged voters within San Francisco to "seek out opportunities to build coalitions."

—Jacob Smith Yang

Heartland goes under

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind.—Citing sluggish ad sales and Midwestern conservatism, *Heartland*, an eight-state regional gay newspaper, announced that it has permanently ceased production as of June 19.

Founded in 1989 and modeled after *USA Today*, *Heartland* was a free, monthly paper with a readership of 80,000 lesbians and gay men in the Midwest.

"After working so hard to create this newspaper, it is tragic to realize that the noble experiment we have nurtured so long must come to an end," said Joseph F Miller, *Heartland*'s founder and publisher. "But if the community cannot afford to support the press which serves it, the press can scarcely

afford to continue its struggle to survive," he added.

Faced with an on-going lack of advertising support, *Heartland* had lost an estimated \$103 thousand since its founding in October, 1989. By the end of 1991, projected total losses would have exceeded \$150 thousand.

Miller said that he blamed the Midwest's conservative climate for preventing most major businesses from advertising in *Heartland*. He said that in the last three months, *Heartland* had approached 700 potential advertisers, and while many expressed interest in reaching the gay community, they feared "public-opinion backlash."

"*Heartland* is by no means the only gay publication that is having difficulties," said James C. Jackson, the paper's editor-in-chief. "We know of several other publications in the region whose financial problems are profound, and who wouldn't be publishing at all if they didn't have 900-number ads."

According to Jackson, 900-number advertisements generate desperately needed revenue to most major gay publications in the U.S. While *Heartland* had used 900-number advertising, Jackson said it was a difficult decision for the paper to make. He said that only one or two general-interest gay publications refuse such ads, and those are located in larger markets where there are many gay businesses willing to support gay papers.

Miller said that many publications across the U.S., including gay and mainstream newspapers and newsmagazines, are facing the possibility of having to close due to lack of financial support from readers and advertisers.

Some of *Heartland*'s top news stories included a series of extensive interviews with gay employees at the National Air and Space Administration (NASA), an expose of discriminatory practices at an Indiana ambulance company, and reports of emerging gay movements throughout Eastern Bloc nations.

—Jacob Smith Yang

Lutherans encourage gay/lesbian ministers

KENOSHA, Wis.—A resolution encouraging congregations to accept lesbians and gay men as ministers was passed June 8 by delegates of a southeastern Wisconsin synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA). Meanwhile, controversy rages over the outing and resignation of the assistant to the Lutheran bishop in La Crosse, some 200 miles to the west.

According to the *New York Native*, the Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly passed the resolution, 208-162. Prior to the vote, a debate was heard between nine speakers who supported the resolution and eight who opposed it.

While supporters praised the measure for encouraging gay and lesbian participation and inclusion within the church, others voiced concern about its impact on Lutheranism.

"We haven't resolved whether homosexuality is a sin," said Rev. Mark Wilms. "We might be heading toward the view of sexuality that might be too undefined, too unstructured to preserve our Lutheran faith."

The resolution was supported by Rev. Peter Rogness, bishop of the Greater Milwaukee Synod, which encompasses 142 congregations in southeast Wisconsin.

"The majority felt the church is a welcoming place for all people," Rogness said.

The extent to which the Lutheran Church actually welcomes gay men and lesbians has been called into question across the state in La Crosse. The Rev. Paul Johnson, assistant to Bishop Stefan Guttorsson of the Lacrosse Area Synod of the ELCA, resigned from his post after his sexual orientation was disclosed by two fellow Lutherans to whom he had come out in confidence at a Chicago conference.

"I submitted my resignation because I am not in agreement with the guidelines of the ELCA regarding ordination of people who are gay," Johnson told the *Wisconsin Light*, a gay newspaper.

Citing a state law that forbids discrimination based on sexual orientation, yet exempts churches, Johnson said, "In any other profession I'd have a strong case."

—Jacob Smith Yang



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Hidden camera records gay bashing

California gay man captures assailant on videotape as proof of repeated violent harassment

By Jacob Smith Yang

SAN JOSE, Calif.—Videotape footage showing a man being gay-bashed by a neighbor's 17-year-old son was broadcast by several Bay Area television stations on June 14, bringing mainstream media attention to the issue of anti-gay hate crimes.

Activists working against anti-gay violence praised the media attention given the incident. However, they criticized some newspapers for not covering the event and cautioned against considering video cameras as the ultimate solution to anti-gay violence.

"Obviously if someone catches something on videotape, it is wonderful evidence," said Joyce Collier, coordinator of the Fenway Community Health Center's Victim Recovery Program in Boston. "But I think self-protection should be people's first priority."

'Fucking faggot'

William Kiley, survivor of the June 11 attack, told *GCN*, "This has been the culmination of a three-year-long dispute between the family involved and myself." He added, "I always felt it was a gay issue."

Kiley set up the video camera in the front window of his home on the advice of a lawyer who said he needed photographic proof to substantiate his charge that the next-door neighbors were harassing him.

Following the widely seen videotaped beating of Rodney King by Los Angeles police, some attorneys have recommended that clients obtain videotaped evidence.

The videotape begins with a teenager yelling at William Kiley, who is watering his lawn with a hose. The youth then walks onto the lawn and makes several attempts to knock the hose from Kiley's hand. When he fails to elicit any response from Kiley, he lunges at Kiley and punches him in the nose. When Kiley asks the youth to leave his property, he is instead approached and, in self-defense, sprays his assailant in the face. Angered, the young man takes off his shirt, attacks Kiley with his fists, forces him to the ground, and strikes and kicks him repeatedly.

Throughout the assault the teenager can be heard screaming "Fucking faggot!" as he punches and kicks Kiley.

The fight ends when the youth's family emerges from their house next door.

"He tried to kick me in the face," said Kiley, "but slipped and fell on his butt. That's when the mother came out and screamed at me, calling me 'asshole' and 'faggot,'" he said.

Kiley told *GCN* that he sustained injuries including a fractured nose, a strained neck vertebra, blackened eyes, a split lip, a swollen face and bruises on his skull, neck, and chest.

According to San Jose police spokesperson Veronica Damon, police officers arrived at the scene after receiving a report of an assault and battery. At that time, Kiley declined to authorize a citizen's arrest and refused medical attention.

Damon said that when the police officers arrived, Kiley did not tell them about the videotape or raise the possibility that his assault was hate related.

Three days later, however, the videotape footage appeared on Bay Area's KPIX-TV, Channel 5.

San Jose police then questioned Kiley and began an investigation. The unidentified 17-year-old was subsequently charged with violation of an individual's civil rights, battery causing serious bodily injury and assault with a deadly weapon. He surrendered to police June 18.

Kiley, who described his assailant as a "heavily tattooed skinhead," said he wants the youth to be tried as an adult, and believes the teenager was two weeks shy of his eighteenth birthday when the attack took place.

The youth's use of the terms "faggot," "cocksucker," and other anti-gay epithets

during the beating are primary evidence that the beating was a hate crime.

Kiley said he thought it was no coincidence that his attack came three days after San Jose's Gay Pride march.

"There is an anti-gay sentiment among some people in San Jose, and when we have our Gay Freedom month they get furious," Kiley said. "They [the family next door] know I am active in the community, they watched me build a float in my driveway." He added, "I was the most visible representation of the gay community and they lashed out."

Kiley said that the assailant, his mother and father had often directed anti-gay slurs at him. The family reportedly belongs to a fundamentalist Christian church in San Jose.

"It is important to prosecute and let people know that we [gay men and lesbians] won't put up with this," said Kiley. "The kid has got to learn that people suffer consequences for violently expressing their hatred." He added, "I never intended to be the poster boy for gay bashing, but this is definitely bringing situations like mine to light."

'In living color'

While local television stations provided extensive coverage, San Francisco's two daily newspapers, the *Chronicle* and the *Examiner*, did not cover the incident for four days after the story broke. Both newspapers have bureaus in San Jose, and they had access to an Associated Press wire story on the incident.

Kiley said that part of the extensive media attention of his case has to do with the fact that he has videotape evidence.

"When people see it in living color, they feel the pain," said Kiley, adding that he had received at least 50 calls from people throughout the country expressing their sympathy and support.

"The videotape brought to the forefront, in vivid detail, difficulties of trying to prove a hate crime," said Kiley. "In this case the authorities cannot deny what happened."

Kiley said he would like to see video camera used more extensively at gay and lesbian bars, in areas known for anti-gay violence and by organizations like San Francisco's Community United Against Violence (CUAV).

Kevin Berrill, of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force's Anti-Gay and -Lesbian Violence Project, agrees that videotape surveillance might be feasible in certain situations, for instance when the homes of gay and lesbian couples are repeatedly vandalized. However, he cautions that because most people cannot predict where or when they will be the attacked, video cameras might be of little use in combatting hate crimes.

Berrill said he has mixed feelings about increased public attention to videotaped hate crimes.

"One of the things that struck me so much about the Rodney King case is that, while years of minority abuse at the hands of Los Angeles police were documented, it took one videotaped, graphic display of violence to make people sit up and take notice," Berrill said.

"It angers me that it takes people making videotapes before arrests are made," Berrill said. "Victims should not have to be responsible for documenting their own attacks: violence warrants police surveillance."

Berrill also expressed concern that people who arrange to videotape their own attacks hesitate to defend themselves because they want the videotaped events to be clear.

The Victim Recovery's Collier echoed that concern. "If he was beat up, that man could have been killed," Collier said. "I would rather see people focus on violence intervention and self-protection."

—filed from Boston



Customs releases lesbian erotica

U.S. distributor sees a connection between press inquiries and the dropping of obscenity charges against Love Bites

By Wickie Stamps

BOSTON—Over 1000 copies of a book featuring erotic lesbian photographs have been released by U.S. Customs just 10 days after being seized and declared obscene. The copies of the book, titled *Love Bites*, were en route from the British publishing company Gay Men's Press to Alyson Publications, the book's U.S. distributors.

Upon entering the Boston port, Customs officials confiscated the books, notified Alyson Publications of the seizure and requested permission to destroy them. Customs also informed Alyson that the obscenity declaration could be contested through the U.S. Attorney's office.

"For several days, I had been trying to reach the U.S. attorney handling the case, but she didn't return my calls," explained Sasha Alyson, president of Alyson Publications. Shortly thereafter, news media outlets began calling the U.S. Attorney's office after being alerted about the case by Alyson. According to Alyson, 24 hours after *Publishers Weekly*, a trade magazine contacted the U.S. Attorney's office for the publishing industry,

all charges against *Love Bites* were dropped and Customs immediately released the books.

"Their about-face took us by surprise," said Alyson. "We finally got the books, but I'm disturbed that nothing happened until the press started phoning. Does the First Amendment protect only people with good media contacts?" he asked.

"Although *Love Bites* is far less explicit than [gay photographer Robert] Mapplethorpe's work," according to Alyson, "in both cases, people who were bothered by the gay content tried to hide their homophobia behind the obscenity laws." Once the dust settles in the *Love Bites* case, Alyson said he will look into how much "this fiasco" has cost U.S. taxpayers.

In England, a separate censorship battle still rages. Although London's mainstream bookstores are carrying *Love Bites*, Gay's The Word, a gay bookstore and Silver Moon, a women's bookstore, refuse to stock it. Both fear retaliation under England's Obscene Publications Act which prohibits any images

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Hearing set for P'town demonstrators

A gay man who distributed the videotape of an impromptu sit-down and a lesbian who was 'singled out' for arrest are accused of leading last September's demonstration against the police

By Elizabeth Yukins

PROVINCETOWN, Mass.—Nearly one year after a large-scale civil disobedience action took place against local police, the upcoming trial of two protestors has again raised issues about gay activism, law enforcement and local politics in this well-known gay and lesbian resort town.

While police charge that the two demonstrators obstructed police business, gay activists here say that the complaints are unfounded, unjust and retaliatory. Many also question if the decision to single out the two protesters was politically motivated.

Controversy surrounding the charges center on when the police complaints were filed and who—out of over 200 demonstrators—was chosen for prosecution. Gay activists and civil rights advocates assert that the police initially singled out the one protester who had used a videotape of the demonstration to criticize the Provincetown Police Department. Activists charge that the police then brought in a second defendant in order to cover up their motivations.

The two protestors have been charged with similar violations. Mike Mammone, a local resident and gay activist, is scheduled to stand trial for disorderly conduct and interfering with a police officer. Patty Latz, another Provincetown resident, faces charges of disturbing the peace and interfering with a police officer.

Video activist

Mammone told *GCN* that he believes the charges brought against him stem from the central role he played in distributing a video that was filmed during the demonstration. He

said that a friend had videotaped much of the action and then authorized him to distribute it. Immediately after the action, Mammone contacted local television stations, and the video ran on six news programs.

Mammone said that he was very active distributing the video and criticizing the police in the two weeks between the incident and when the charges were filed. Mammone's lawyer, Sarah Wunsch of the Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts, told *GCN* that the 14-day time lapse between the incident and the complaint "leads to the inference that [Mammone] has been selected for prosecution because of his involvement with the video and numerous speeches."

'Inciting the crowd'

The confrontation with the police occurred in the early morning hours of Sept. 5, 1990, following an end-of-summer party at the Crown and Anchor bar. (See *GCN*, Vol. 18, No. 9.) The bar had sponsored its annual "Golden Plunger" awards party, and party-goers, along with other town residents and visitors, gathered afterwards at Spiritus, a nearby restaurant.

According to police reports and eyewitnesses, trouble began when a local drag queen, Vanilla, attempted to stick one of the "golden plungers" on the back of a van carrying friends. When the police intervened and arrested Vanilla, the predominantly lesbian and gay crowd became angry and defiant. Over 200 people surrounded the police car and threw pizza, ice cream and coins, while others sat down in the street to prevent the car from taking Vanilla to the

Continued on page 6

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NAPWA criticized

Dear GCN:

I am concerned that GCN carried a story written by Jacob Smith Yang regarding a *small faction* of members of the National Association of People with AIDS with a strong *and inaccurate* criticism of NAPWA. Three groups (PWAC/NY, Boston Living Center and PWAC/Tampa) are disgruntled over the firing of Michael Meridian, the former executive director of NAPWA. They claim that the executive committee of NAPWA met, illegally and in secret, conspiring to fire Michael Meridian. This is simply untrue.

I suppose these people's actions should not have surprised me, because each of the groups are upset that they were unable to get their issues discussed and ratified at the May meeting of NAPWA. Contrary to Yang's article, there was nothing clandestine nor improper regarding Meridian's firing. Meridian was given every opportunity to change direction and bring his administration back into line with NAPWA's mission and chose, instead, to politicize and agitate amongst, serving his personal interests over those of NAPWA and its membership.

Should your reporter have contacted the duly elected representative of Region 1 (comprised of ME, NH, VT, MA, RI and CT) or the Chairman of the Board, Jack Markham, he would have learned that there were issues concerning improper actions by Meridian that could well have caused NAPWA to lose all federal funding and corporate grants, as well as its tax-exempt status should Meridian have stayed in charge. A newspaper is not the place to air "dirty laundry"—especially when there are personal egos at issue. McEvoy was not eligible to be privy to Board actions because alternates only vote when the elected representative is unable to do so. He has since agitated and attempted to overturn the election *because he lost the election* to represent Region 1. Furthermore, McEvoy stepped down from NAPWA's board in 1990 because he could not work with them. Now he's trying to take over again? That's not leadership, in my opinion, it is personal aggrandizement which cannot be condoned.

Such articles as printed in the May 26-June 1 issue of GCN only contribute to the "divide and conquer" activities practiced by Jesse Helms, William Dannemeyer and other homophobic, AIDS-phobic politicians. Please try to print *both* sides of issues in the future. One-sided, divisive articles are a disservice to our community. *Gay men and lesbians—unite!!!* Quit playing political, self-serving games with my life and hundreds of thousands of PWAs' lives across the country. Upon investigation, Peoples with AIDS Coalition/CT supports the present Board of Directors' action and denounces the divisiveness and childish games being played by McEvoy and Gutenberg (PWAC/NY). As long as we fight among ourselves, playing up individual egos over the common good of our communities, we will never succeed in bringing about change for the better. Come on, brothers and sisters, UNITE and stop the personal innuendos and character assassinations. UNITED WE STAND—DIVIDED WE FALL!!!!

Sincerely,
W. Shayne MacLeod IV
East Hartford, CT

Write the CDC

Dear GCN:

GCN deserves thanks for running an editorial in its Pride issue (June 9-5, '91, Vol. 18, No. 45) on the HIV immigration ban and its potential for undermining or even forcing the cancellation of the 1992 International AIDS Conference and World STD Congress in Boston. We cannot let a group of right-wing religious bigots and hysterical AIDS-phobic zealots gain the upper hand after so much controversy over this issue at the time of the San Francisco AIDS conference. Not only is this an attack on the freedoms of people with HIV and AIDS, it is a direct attack on the gay/lesbian community and AIDS community in Boston. Hosting the 1992 AIDS Conference is something Boston has earned. We need the business—just ask any member of the Hotel and Restaurant worker's union; and we need the forum for debate. This is the center of the so-called medical universe, and, in spite of our many problems, a comparatively progressive place on sexuality and AIDS. According to a special issue of John James' *AIDS Treatment News*, the "Public Comment" period on this ban runs until August 2, making lobbying efforts imperative and worthwhile now. Please write to the CDC:

Director, Division of Quarantine

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Opinions reflected in "editorials" represent the views of the paid staff collective. Signed letters and columns represent the views and opinions of the authors only. We encourage all readers to send us comments, criticism, and information, and to volunteer and become members.

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and tell them to get past what amounts to mean-spirited fear and totally unscientific hysteria. James also urges letters to the White House and elected representatives. This is a time for our emerging gay/lesbian Republican presence in Boston to prove that an alliance with the Bush administration can prove useful. Our Republican governor and his Log Cabin Club allies should be leading the fight on the 1992 conference. It is a Republican ban; therefore maybe it can be undone by a Republican lobbying effort—if not for the civil rights issues involved, then for the business. Boston needs the revenue, and Harvard's AIDS Institute wants the glamour and publicity. Many of the rest of us want the opportunity for debate and to protest Harvard's ominous research machine.

For that reason I write this with some trepidation. The Harvard AIDS Institute is rallying our community behind it for the sake of keeping the conference in Boston—but we must be aware that this is also an opportunity for co-optation and a watering down of conflict at a time when Harvard remains the primary impediment to AIDS research progress. The Harvard Medical School is a leader, all right—a leader in wasting NIH funds, underenrolling clinical trials, obsessing about nucleoside analogue drugs like AZT while PWAs die of Opportunistic Infections, blatant conflicts of interest, continued use of placebos, and an arrogance that does not even pervade the military-industrial machine. Max Essex, conference chair, has been written about in *New England Monthly, Boston Magazine*, and in the gay press for his outrageous business investments and lucrative deals; it appears that Harvard research has helped spin off at least on major private company, Essex's Cambridge BioScience. Harvard's Jerome Groupman is a despised enemy of AIDS activists; and Mass General's Martin Hirsch—though he has come around a bit of late—is still a denizen of the old-boy network. We need the 1992 event if only to provide a forum for exposing and blasting Harvard and the whole overblown AIDS infrastructure in Boston—a city where professionals in "AIDS work" OUTNUMBER PWAs! *And yet PWAs still go without housing, food and medical treatment!* We should all fight the immigration ban and secure the 1992 AIDS Conference for Boston in May, and we

should all be out there in the streets blasting the Boston bureaucracy so that the world knows that, up close, Harvard's crimson is colored with the blood of innocent AIDS research subjects.

Please, GCN readers, write to the CDC and the White House—not for Harvard, but for the real people of Boston who have fought the AIDS crisis for so many years against such incredible odds.

Sincerely,
Steve Rose
Boston, MA

Oppression comes out

Dear GCN:

Several weeks ago, you published an article by Sonia De Vries about Cuba and AIDS, attempting to reassure your readers that Cuba has a compassionate and caring government that means no harm to people with AIDS. I am writing to urge, with all my heart, that your readers not swallow the propaganda line peddled by Ms. De Vries, who has in the past been incapable of seeing the truth about Cuba's oppressive and violent government.

For many years, I was a supporter of the Cuban Revolution, but this support came primarily out of a rather blind ideological belief in Communism. When I allowed my mind to be opened to the facts, a process that began when I came out of the closet and got involved in gay liberation, and when I spoke to people who were not spokesmen of Cuban government, and to people who were not afraid of the government, I found that I was sadly, tragically mistaken. I found that the Cuban Revolution was not a harbinger of freedom for Latin Americans, as I initially believed, but rather was (and still is) an Orwellian nightmare.

With the crumbling of Communism in Eastern Europe, including the Soviet Union, there are those, such as Ms. De Vries, who wish to make an exception for Cuba. But there is no factual justification for this exception.

The only reason for this exception is simple: the people in Cuba are not yet free to speak their minds.

We all know now about the multitude of economic, social, judicial and environmental atrocities committed by Communist governments in Europe. Is Cuba different? I say emphatically that it is not. Indeed, Cuba today is the most Stalinist and repressive society of what's left of the communist world. Adoration of Fidel Castro is

A home of our own

[The following speech was delivered at the closing ceremony of the 7th International Conference on AIDS in Florence, Italy.]

By Dr. Max Essex

I have thrown out my original prepared speech. I have stayed up most of the night preparing another. Please listen.

A journalist said to me yesterday that I had made a non-statement regarding whether the Boston conference would take place as scheduled. Let me change that impression.

There will be no conference in Boston unless all American travel and immigration restrictions against HIV-infected people are lifted by August 3, 1991.

As a scientist, I never expected to be so preoccupied with the issue of national politics. I admit I was naïve.

At Wednesday's press conference, my inability to navigate successfully between the activists and the journalists was apparent.

I know in my heart, however, that the world will be ill-served by the loss of international communication. The cooperation that will be blocked if the Bush administration does not change its misguided and discriminatory travel and immigration policies will be a major setback for all of us.

But let me be blunt. Science must be honest and so will I.

There are two issues at play—restrictions against travel by the HIV infected and those against immigration. There is a broad range of diverse opinion. The International AIDS Society, the World Health Organization and the National Commission on AIDS state they would support the Boston conference if travel restrictions alone are lifted. The Gay Men's Health Crisis and ACT UP have made clear their threats to disrupt and shut down a conference that takes place if only the travel restriction alone is lifted. All of these

organizations have their own agendas.

It may also surprise you to learn that the chairs of the 1991, 1992, and 1993 conference have no representation on the very organization formed to recognize and coordinate these conferences.

I must apologize to many of the international members of the Conference for the parochial and domestic focus of my remarks, but please hear me out.

I am not the smooth politician that some would wish me to be. I am grieved that the crass, domestic, American political agenda and the ultimatums I have received from activists have conspired in a bizarre alliance to deny the free exchange of information necessary to fight AIDS.

Well over 100,000 deaths in the United States have been documented. In the U.S., Persons with AIDS have a voice but have not been adequately heard. The Third World, however, is experiencing 95 percent of all new HIV infections. These people will most certainly die with NO VOICE at all.

We must not be so preoccupied by our own domestic policy problems that we close our minds to their pain and suffering.

AND let us acknowledge that the U.S. is not alone in its discriminatory policies. Are we confident that a person with HIV can so freely emigrate to those countries designated as our future sites?

I am not hopeful that there will be a Boston conference. As an American and a scientist, I am outraged at the discriminatory U.S. policies. My staff and I will work tirelessly during the next month-and-a-half to bring our government to its senses. I implore each and every one of you to return to your supportive colleagues, families and friends armed with more of our letters to send to my government.

and equal rights for homosexuals, alas, a startling case occurred in the New York theater recently. A new play called *Round II: Gay Life in New York in the 1970s*, by the celebrated American critic and playwright, Eric Bentley, was almost completely ignored by the media with the result that few people saw this important play. Why is it that the television media, the *New York Times* (where Bentley has published frequently) and other newspapers and magazines—even the *Village Voice* which published only a tiny squib about it—ignored Bentley's latest play?

People who know theatre can speculate: 1) The play was produced at The Wings Theatre, a small non-Equity theatre where the actors were not paid, and therefore the kind of theatre that the media does not usually cover; 2) Bentley is widely known as the foremost drama critic of our times, which makes many drama critics unwilling to confront his plays. Yet neither of these reasons suffices if the media are supposed to have the freedom to cover important events.

Last Tuesday night, May 14, with my wife, I attended one of the final performances in the five-week run of *Round II* at the Wings Theater. The direction by Greg Mehrtens, the well-known actor and director from Mabou Mines, was perceptively defined. The music of the 1970s that Mehrtens selected was enjoyable and pertinent. As for the script, Bentley has written a moving variation on Schnitzler's famous play, *Reigen* or *La Ronde* as in the film, which features a heterosexual round dance of various couples representing the range of Viennese society. Although he includes some of Schnitzler's comic jokes and patterns of behavior, Bentley has created his own witty dialogue that illuminates a wide range of New York characters in the free, exploratory sexual climate of the 1970s before AIDS. Bentley's purpose, as was Schnitzler's, is to portray various types—hustler, soldier, art student, lawyer, business man, teenager, writer, actor, and a civic VIP—who represent important social directions of the period. Finally, the play culminates in the most moving scene of all between a gay transvestite actor and a city VIP who is still in the closet and searching out his true sexual identity. For a moment, these two men fall in love and Bentley makes the difference between love and transient sex powerfully apparent.

Bentley and Mehrtens auditioned many actors for the play and the resultant performances were all competent with three outstanding performances from Ron Brooker as the Hustler, Richard Aldis as the Writer, and Harold Gross as the transvestite actor. It is a decided shame when an important play by a writer who has contributed so much to

the American theatre, a play which defines a significant period of change and adjustment in our history, is ignored in this discriminatory way. Is Bentley too controversial in the sympathetic, frank way that he portrays gay sex? Whatever the inadequate reasons that condemned this production from the consideration that it deserves, it is time for the media to take a new look at the significant cultural events they are supposed to be reporting.

James Schevill
Providence, RI

Open your heart

Dear GCN:

I feel a strong need to express my opinion upon a very important and crucial issue to each and every gay in this world. Even though I know that one person's opinion isn't worth crap, and I don't mean to offend any of the hypocrites out in the world, but I have to give it to you straight.

I have, for years, sought the gay community's support, with VERY little success. The support I sought has been for gay men and women who are incarcerated. I sought support for better living conditions, education, etc. Each time I cried out to the outside for help, it was as if I was making my plea to a *brick wall*. I will tell you that if we cannot form some type of *unity* among ourselves, to support ourselves, then we will never exceed beyond the point where we exist right now. It's truly a damn shame, because with all of the gay men and women today, there seems to be a fear for many to open their mouths, be heard and stand up to be counted. Those who fit that category need to change their lives and go *straight*, as your being gay serves no purpose whatsoever. You are nothing but dead weight to the community and if you don't take some type of stand for who you are, then how can you ever take a stand for anything in life?

You see, we are always seeking help, but if we deny one another, how in the hell can we expect someone else to help us? We must first learn to lend a helping hand to one another before we can ever hope for another to lend us a helping hand.

I have sought help in trying to organize a support group for gay prisoners, and gay Christian prisoners, but I am (we are) so limited within the prison system that without a sufficient voice's support and help from the gay community at large, we can't and will never achieve that goal.

The type of program I have been trying to organize is one of helping gay prisoners upon their release from prison to become involved in job placement services, vocational services and housing for each one who does not have a place to live. It is

We must recapture the spirit we felt at the opening of the 1990 San Francisco Conference—scientists, people with HIV, health care professionals and activists communication effectively with mutual respect in our common battle.

Please participate in the march to the U.S. Consulate here in Florence—let us make our protest loud and clear to my government.

The threat to our international fight against AIDS from intransigence, belligerence and the denial of human rights may well leave us without the Boston Conference.

But frankly, however, at least I can return to my lab. (1st slide, please). This is Magdalena Bankowski from Switzerland, Boris Renfro from Colombia, Dieudonne Mubikayi from Zaire, Aissatou Gueye from Senegal, Lukemuena Kashala from Zaire, Xiaofang Yu from China, and Woan-Roah Lee from Taiwan.

These people are my students, my teachers, my friends. They represent the core, the stimulus and the intellectual strength of my own AIDS research effort. They do not represent politics, ignorance, fear or confrontation. They represent instead our hope for a future without AIDS. They, more than any words I can offer, best symbolize my vision of a World United Against AIDS.

In any event, let us join together in Dakar, Senegal for the 6th International Conference on AIDS in Africa in December.

It is not the loss of Boston that matters ultimately. It is the loss of solidarity, the lack of respect for human rights, and the loss of our rights to the free exchange of ideas that pose such a serious catastrophe for a successful effort against this AIDS pandemic.

Dr. Max Essex is Chairmen of the 8th International Conference on AIDS, scheduled to be held in Boston next year.

important for a prisoner to know that he or she is not going back to face the world alone, and it is doubly important for a gay, because the road is just that much harder. A gay ex-felon needs someone there to lend that helping hand, and help him or her with those needed psychological adjustments which occur upon returning to society. It is an important factor in steering them from returning to criminal activities.

Such a placement-assistance program will be highly beneficial to our gay community, but if we do not pull together and show them that they are not alone we are going to lose a lot of our gay brothers and sisters in the cycle of recidivism. It is a very vital issue and it needs to be addressed immediately!

I am writing this letter in another attempt to seek some type of support from the gay community that I have been a part of all of my life. I am getting ready to be released from prison somewhere within the next 3 to 9 months, and I am trying to reach my goal, with a little help from you. If you are interested in knowing more about my plans I would like for you to write me at the address below and I will explain further.

I come to each of you with an open heart and ask you to please hear my plea, and for you not to turn your back on your brothers and sisters in the community. We must pull together as one in unity if we are to make any meaningful changes. Write to me at Gerard "Brandi" Phelps, #117296 Camp H Ext L/D, La. State Penitentiary, Angola, Louisiana 70712.

I would like to thank GCN for being one of the biggest supporters of the incarcerated gays by sharing free subscriptions, ads and much other help to us all. You are doing a great job. Please continue, as you are very much appreciated and loved for your kindness and support.

Sincerely,
Gerard "Brandi" Phelps
Angola, LA

GCN needs volunteers to do lots of things. Don't miss this chance to help out your favorite weekly. Call 426-4469 for more details.

inexcusable, especially when one considers what we know today about the official (and artificial) adoration once accorded to Ceaucescu, Mao and Stalin. I could show you many articles published in the *National Guardian*, the *Daily Worker* and other periodicals in the 1950s and 1960s that are filled with praise of the communist regimes and leaders in Eastern Europe and Asia. Ms. De Vries' article about Cuba falls into the same category—ideological journalism. I know about this kind of journalism because I practiced it myself, something I admit to my shame.

Yes, even though she is a lesbian, she is duped by the Cuban government because of her ideological commitments. She criticizes people for imposing a certain "perspective on an entirely different culture and system," yet it is her perspective that causes the limitation, a perspective based on an ideology that refuses to deal with history and reality.

For example, she refers to the "internationalist soldiers" returning to Cuba from Angola, but she neglects to mention that these soldiers and their families were never given the facts about the war in Africa and never given any choice about their participation. Does anyone reading this think there was ever open, public debate about whether or not Cuban soldiers should go to fight in Africa?

Ms. De Vries does not even consider that the Cuban health ministry officials who spoke to her and the HIV positive "out gay man" who spoke to her are capable of telling her lies upon lies. Did it ever occur to her that they lied? That they lied a whole lot? That the idea of Cuba spending \$7,000 annually for AZT for an AIDS patient is patently absurd? Does she think the Cuban government actually gave air conditioning and color TV to the people in an AIDS quarantine area? She states, "People receive the best health care available and no monetary limit exists on whatever treatment is necessary." What a sad joke! She probably was told that Cuba has a model penal system, but ask Amnesty International about that one!

Cuba is a nation where official statistics and statements are to be taken with a grain of salt, indeed a pound of salt, since the government controls everything without allowing any outside scrutiny. The Cuban health system was modeled on the systems in Czechoslovakia, Hungary and East Germany, so are we to believe that Cuba has succeeded in actually winning the hearts of its people while the people in Eastern Europe express revulsion to their experience under communism?

Much is made of Cuba's system of education. According to UNESCO, in 1959, Cuba had a fairly better starting point than its neighbors—79 percent literacy. Nowadays, most Caribbean nations have achieved a high degree of literacy. In Central America, Costa Rica, where democracy is intact, has surpassed Cuba in literacy—without fanfare and without censorship, repression, political prisoners and the most massive political exodus of the hemisphere. I agree with a group of Cuban exiles who once wrote, "Education is more like force-fattening livestock when censors select what will be published and many books remain totally forbidden....Once Cubans on the island are able to speak freely, many of the fallacies of the system will come to the surface."

Maybe some day, when the truth about this oppression comes out, Ms. De Vries will feel the same kind of remorse that I feel. And maybe the editors of GCN will feel a little remorse, too, about failing to question whether it is right for them to publish such an article.

Yours sincerely,
Allen Young
Author of *Gays Under the Cuban Revolution*
Athol, MA

Theater in the closet

Dear GCN:

On the front page of the Arts and Leisure section of the *New York Times*, Sunday, May 19, 1991, John J. O'Connor began an article called "Gay Images: TV's Mixed Signal," by stating: "The message to the medium is blunt: 'It is time for the television industry to realize that 25 million lesbians and gay men in America, along with our families and friends, make up a significant share of the viewing audience. We are tired of seeing gays represented only as buffoons or villains.'" The statement was from an advertisement published by the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD).

If television, and society, are being challenged about fair treatment in the media

Love Bites

Continued from page 3
of lesbian oral sex or penetration of a woman by a dildo. Such images are portrayed in *Love Bites*.

"When the Obscene Publications Squad comes in to do a trawl," said Linda Semple of Silver Moon, "they come in on the pretext of picking up one book and take away lots to see what they've got." Semple was interviewed in *City Limits*, a mainstream London weekly that covered the *Love Bites* controversy on its front page. "A small bookshop goes bust, not because they're found guilty, but because it takes two years to go to court," Semple explained.

Another women's bookstore, Sisterwrite, is refusing to carry *Love Bites* for "ideological reasons."

Della Grace, author of *Love Bites* stated in the *City Limits* article, "It matters to me that I'm excluded from the two women's bookstores in town. *Love Bites* is first and foremost for other lesbians. I want women to see it and say 'Great, I'm not sick, a pervert. I'm a strong woman and it's creative and powerful to dress up and be sexual.'"

Grace and her fellow members of Perverts Undermining State ScrutinY (PUSSY)—an anti-censorship affinity group of OutRage, the British gay and lesbian direct action group are taking up the *Love Bites* battle. In an effort to prompt people to buy the book, PUSSY will set up booths complete with music and balloons in front of Silver Moon.

P'town

Continued from page 3
police station.

Two weeks later, in a complaint filed Sept. 19, two officers involved in the incident charged that Mammone and Latz acted as leaders during the protest, urging people to become involved in the demonstration and to sit down in front of the police car. The officers said that they saw Mammone and Latz prompting the riot, and that the two defendants played a key role in preventing the police car from leaving the scene.

Police Chief James Meads said that he backs his officers' statements. He told *GCN*, "Those two [officers] were the ones originally on the scene, and they say that [Mammone and Latz] were responsible for inciting the crowd and prompting people to prevent the cruiser from taking off." He added, "If you don't think an arrest is justified, you go to court; you don't block a police car from accessing."

'No ringleaders'

The defendants and witnesses who were present at the demonstration adamantly deny that either Latz or Mammone led the action against the police. Mammone said that he did not arrive at the scene until well after the demonstration had begun and the police car had been blocked. Latz said that she did not lead the crowd, and that she was one among a huge group of people sitting in front of the police car.

"It is ridiculous that they singled two people out of 200," said John Perry Ryan, a member of ACT UP/Provincetown who was present at the demonstration. "There were no ringleaders [that night]," he said.

"What I saw were 200 people undulating around a police car in what seemed to be a group political consciousness coming into being," Ryan told *GCN*. "Mammone and Latz were among the crowd of people saying no to what they thought was an unjust action taken by the police," he said, adding, "There were scores of other people who could have been charged similarly."

Ryan, together with Mammone, Latz and other gay activists, all say that Mammone may have been targeted for arrest because of his political activism. "This case has given rise to a number of different analyses as to why the police have charged [Mammone and Latz]," Ryan said. "The theories range from the kindest one being that the police have exercised poor judgment, all the way to the idea that Mammone and Latz are being used as political scapegoats.... ACT UP's position on this is that selective prosecution equals civil persecution," he added.

Mammone emphatically agreed that he is being prosecuted because of his criticisms of the police department after the Spiritus protest. "I have repeatedly been critical of how the police handle gaybashing and other gay-related issues, and I was particularly active in protesting how they acted that night at Spiritus," Mammone said. "I believe what is happening now is harassment for my activism in Provincetown."

Mammone told *GCN* that the second defendant, Latz, was only charged in order to veil the politics behind his prosecution. "She was just thrown into this so that I would not

be the only one charged," he said. "Mammone was singled out as a political scapegoat, and Latz was thrown in to sweeten the pie," echoed ACT UP's Ryan.

Latz agrees that she was brought into the case because the police "were going after Mammone" and they needed another person to justify their actions. "Yes, I was there, but I was one of 200 people," she said. "I don't know why they singled me out. I'm a quiet person and I've never done anything like this before."

Latz told *GCN* that her lawyer plans to argue that the police report is false regarding the extent of her involvement. Wunsch, Mammone's lawyer, said that she will argue that the charges brought against him are based on an undefined law that uses the alleged obstruction of police as justification for prohibiting lawful expression.

Wunsch said that she plans to petition for the charges to be dropped at a July 19 hearing. Both Mammone and Latz are scheduled to go on trial August 2.

—filed from Boston

Discharge

Continued from page 1
win," he said.

Tim Drake, military specialist for the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, agreed. "The Air Force handled this abominably. They have a policy that's indefensible. The fact that they would go after someone with 24 hours left on active duty is just appalling." Drake believes that public scrutiny "makes the Air Force look foolish. They have a policy that they cannot defend, and that they're continuing to be challenged on, and they just don't know what to do."

Florence

Continued from page 1

disappointed with ACT UP's focus on cancelling or moving next year's conference, rather than working to lift the immigration and travel bans. "I am grieved by the crass, domestic, American political agenda and the ultimatums I have received from activists [who] have conspired in a bizarre alliance to deny free exchange of information necessary to fight AIDS," he said.

"Make no mistake," Essex warned. "The Bush administration does not want an AIDS forum, especially not during the election year of 1992. How ironic to provide the U.S. right-wing bigots with the outcome they precisely desire."

Spencer Cox of ACT UP/New York responded to criticism of his organization's tactics by saying, "ACT UP is in touch with a sense of urgency that scientists and policy makers are not in touch with. We agree that the conference is extremely important, but it is also important, in light of U.S. policy, that we move the conference."

Added Cox, who attended the conference, "There were definite communication problems, and I don't think ACT UP is free from blame, nor are the conference organizers."

Cox said that it has been a struggle just to get scientists to listen to the concerns of activists and people with AIDS/HIV. "This year's conference provided a very interesting exchange of ideas between scientists and activists," he stated. "That's a big step from where we were two years ago."

Moises Agosto, of ACT UP/New York told *GCN*, "We were not sure at first that we wanted to target conference organizers, but we were getting a mixed message from [them].... They were not clear, and given the time it takes to plan the conference we needed a decision to be made now."

Harvard's Julie Rioux maintains that ACT UP chose an inappropriate forum to discuss next year's conference and interfered with an opportunity for people to learn more about AIDS.

"It is important that, once a year, people be made aware of what is going on with AIDS on an international level," said Rioux. "You don't really learn anything if you switch on the television and see ACT UP."

—filed from Boston

For the full text of Essex's speech, see 'Speaking Out,' p. 6

Gay and Lesbian

Help Line

267-9001 tty/voice

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Cutting Edge Lit

I can think of a number of different reasons that you might want to read *Frisk* by Dennis Cooper.

1. You like good, innovative writing that does things to the surfaces of pages you've never seen done before. You enjoy being totally awed by—oh, let's call it killer prose.

2. You're intrigued by the eros of murder. Specifically, you're into disembowelling boys: tall, pale, big-mouthed, dark-eyed, dreamy boys. The idea of cutting up kids, like, that makes you hard, or wet, or both. You're very curious about the colors and odors and consistencies underneath smooth adolescent skin, and you fantasize about getting at them as violently as possible.

3. You think life is a sociology project that somehow went terribly wrong. And you like to inspect the evidence. You're not that into it emotionally, but you're a connoisseur of exhibits. Of how bad it really is. Forget about *American Psycho*. *Frisk* is Exhibit A.

4. You're just an ordinary person. Let's say you're a tall, dark-haired, big-mouthed boy with pale skin and sleepy eyes. And you have nothing else to do. You could feel ultra-cool telling your friends about this weird book about dying with pre-come shivering on your pale hard dick. That might be fun. Also, since Cooper probably will know telepathically that you're doing this, you might feel eerie and scared and quite freaked-out. That could be really fun.

5. You could annoy people you know who are politically correct. You could tell them about this psychotic writer who's grinding this broken bottle into everybody's faces. They'll say, *Ugh*. You could say, Yeah, too bad you're so into your tired stupid little trip, man. That might be fun.

There must be other reasons for reading *Frisk*. But actually, I don't think you really read it to begin with, in the conventional sense—it's more as though it reads you. This novel has a kind of grisly knack for finding out who you are. It disembowels you, so to speak. It's so extreme and disturbing and nasty and murderous you're forced to ask: What kind of person *am* I, anyway, *reading this book*?

So, how many answers are there to that question? Obviously lots.

I was asking myself a number of questions along these lines as I travelled into Boston's South End recently to interview Dennis Cooper. I was incredibly nervous. Who is this brilliant monster? Who am I? I had an hour and a half to talk with him before guiding him to a reading at Glad Day bookstore and couldn't help but wonder, What if he ends up carrying me to the reading? In a plastic supermarket bag? I envisioned myself sloshing along, lots of red drips. Not that I'm remotely his type. And he does have a definite type of person he'd like to hack apart, tall, pale, dreamy, et cetera. You get this from the book—the snuff-maniac narrator of which is named Dennis, by the way, frighteningly enuff.

He turned out to be a total charmer. (Of course, you hiss knowingly under your breath. They *all* are, dumb-dumb.) He's handsomer and a lot less brooding than his photographs, totally sane-looking, very clean and neat and alert, he doesn't even smoke; he talks in a fractured run-on way which is somehow very fluid, quite hip and cool and endearingly youthful, but nonetheless articulate. And despite the fact that *Frisk* has just told the world that part of his psyche is about as taboo a chamber of horror as is possible to imagine, Cooper seems completely at ease with himself. Such a nice guy! I was surprised.

Read the book and you'll see why. In fact, you probably will have a difficult time believing that one word of the last paragraph is true. Because the character Dennis in *Frisk* has a mind like a walk-in refrigerator. And it isn't very nice. Carcasses hang from the ceiling, none too cleanly butchered. The victims could be people you know. In fact, they could be you. Worse, this place reeks of orgy—Dennis' cock gets very, very hard in there, and he has no qualms at all about bodily fluids.

How? Why? What? you ask, clutching your stomach. This Dennis—how did he get so dreadfully *fucked up*? Well, it goes like



In the first of a two-part interview, Dennis Cooper dissects his characters and their motivations

By Lewis Gannett

this. When the *Frisk* Dennis was thirteen he used to bike down to a greasy little porn shop about once a week. The old, drunk owner would let him look at magazines full of naked men and boys doing great things to each other. The old man even let Dennis go into the back storeroom with the stuff and jerk off. Then one day the geezer showed Dennis some photographs. They were of a dark-haired boy, maybe 14, around Dennis' age, who was dead. Evidently he'd been murdered. There was a huge man-made crater in his ass.

These photos haunt Dennis. He grows older, becomes a punk, renames himself Spit, has lots of sex with other punky boys. The sex is kind of impersonal, partly because everybody's on drugs all the time, partly because Spit can't really connect anyway with these emotionally blocked space-cases, of which he himself is a prime example. He keeps thinking about violence. About those photos. Maybe doing serious damage to somebody would be a way to finally connect.... One night he goes home with a kid named Samson and does some pretty serious damage. The experience freaks Spit out. Samson doesn't die or anything, but Spit sort of feels like he's going somewhere with this....

He gets older and becomes Dennis again. There's a really hot porn star in New York named Pierre who is also a call boy. Dennis crosses the country to find him, and does. He tells Pierre he would like to kill him. Pierre considers bolting from Dennis' hotel room but stays and listens because Dennis' reasons for wanting to kill him are weirdly interesting and Dennis doesn't seem like he's really going to do it anyway, he's too crazy about this murder stuff to be serious. Pierre learns more about what turns Dennis on. The

problem Dennis has connecting with people is getting a lot worse, and he thinks that if he could just like, you know, get into somebody's guts, then maybe something would happen—he'd find out something, find out what's going on, what's wrong.... Dennis crosses the ocean to Amsterdam. He shacks up above a brewery, which means his place stinks to high heaven, which is convenient, because it blocks out other smells. See—uh—Dennis, well, he starts inviting boys over and, and, like, doing things that... that.... Oh, dear! Oh, *no!* OUCH!!!

It's not as bad as it sounds. Actually, it's far worse, but not in the way you might think. This book is the work of a major and completely serious talent. The splatter scenes have a devastating hypno-real quality that made me, for one, feel as if I were *dreaming them*. And although I'm not fond of violence and gore, I love prose that materializes off the page into some kind of vision. There's more to *Frisk* than magical murderous text, however. Its biggest achievement is the way it creates a mind—a very scary mind. Reading *Frisk*, you're living in it. You follow the pathways of its imagination. You inhabit its disconnection. And you see how it tries to construct a world that it can understand, because the construction is going on all around you, as it were. If you decide to check out this handiwork—which, by the way, is extremely ingenious from a technical point of view, although you don't have to be a literary aesthete to get it—you just might wind up saying to yourself: Wow. Some kind of connect!

Big thrill, you mutter. Who needs this? Well, maybe you don't. Maybe you're sick enough of the scary real world we all co-conspire to create. But if you're up for taking

a hard look at this murderous world—and maybe, at yourself—*Frisk* is a rather powerful way to do it.

One last thing that may seem odd: parts of this book are very funny. As in helpless giggling, that is. At least for me. Strange. But true.

WARNING!

If you are a Dennis Cooper fan, or think you might become one, and you haven't read *Frisk*, you might want to delay reading this interview until after you've done so. The following interview gives away a couple of surprises.

Lewis Gannett: Well, let's see. The protagonist of *Frisk* is named Dennis.
Dennis Cooper: Yeah.

And that's you.
Yeah.

To what extent is it autobiographical?
Well, nothing in the book happened.

Nothing?

Certain things in the book happened. But you might as well say nothing because it's not constructed from my life. But the ideas in it are real, and that's about me. I just, like, constructed a world that would get the ideas across that I wanted to get across, better than my own life had, better than my own experiences had. Although some of those people I actually know, I always use real people....

It's a snuff novel. Did it require any particular nerve to write?

A snuff novel? Well it's not really a snuff novel, it's actually a fake snuff novel.

Yeah, but you don't know that when you're reading it. Unless you're clued in in advance, and I wasn't....

Well, you're not supposed to know. I mean once you get it there's like a million clues of all sorts littered through the book, but you're not supposed to know necessarily until you know.

Uh, was it difficult to do? It was difficult and it wasn't difficult, I mean I've been interested in that kind of stuff for a long time, really since I was a teenager.

De Sade?

And Rimbaud. But de Sade was the one. I read that stuff really young, and I wrote a novel that imitated him when I was 16, and I threw it out. But I mean I've been really interested in the mixed feelings I have about torture and murder and sex—and desire involved with violence and stuff—for a long time. So I've written about it in various ways.

It's just that I've never written about it in a kind of ownership way, before. So, *that* was weird. Like trying to find out how to express that in an artificial way, but also, to make sure that I was willing to accept those ideas and those thoughts as being mine.

You are, as far as I can tell, the primo psychoslasher in American writing. Compared to you, the other literary psychoslashers seem trivial. For one thing, they aren't nearly as talented. For another they don't implicate themselves in their work in the blatant way you do, as in *Frisk*, for example. So you're kind of unique. That must put you in a difficult position vis-a-vis the literary establishment. Do you feel misunderstood? Rejected? Lonely? This is kind of a joke question, because—I suspect you must.

Well, the thing is, I mean, yeah, yeah, yeah—but my models—the writers who have influenced me—have always been people who basically haven't been accepted by the mainstream.

Except after the fact. As cult heroes.

Yeah, yeah, "cult." I mean I'm mixed up with it in a cult way. There are people who really like what I do, and I even get serious, heavy literary reviews of my work sometimes, as a cult thing, but.... Most of the

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Cooper

Continued from page 7



Dennis Cooper

people I like are cult. I mean Genet is even cult. He's famous but nobody's actually read him, you know what I mean?

Well, some people have actually read him.

It's true, but if you look at the mainstream canon, he's considered an idiosyncrat, he's a real oddball. He's not considered to be like Henry James. But de Sade—I think he's as great as Shakespeare, or better, I think he has that kind of understanding of humanity. But that's a very weird opinion for the mainstream, because he's considered to be a pornographer. So I'm used to that, I don't even want to be a mainstream success. On the other hand it is sort of distressing that the *New York Times* doesn't want to review me. It's sort of weird. I mean, you know, it would be nice....

Any indication the *Times* might review *Frisk*?

No, they're not going to.

Not even one of those little clips in "In Short?"

No, they've already said no. And it's too bad too, because some people wanted to review it. [Filmmaker] John Waters really likes my work, and he actually was going to review it for them and they wouldn't let him.

They let him review that book about that tag who put gold dust in his hair....

Stephen Tennant. But they wouldn't let him write a review about my book. My editor wrote them a letter protesting.

Do you get kinky fan mail?

Oh.... [laughs] I have.... I haven't for this book yet, but it just came out.

Do boys come up to you after readings and say things like, "Stab me, Dennis!"

[laughs] Not very often. I mean, no....

No?

No. But there have been very rare occasions when I've had boys want to go to bed with me and want me to be really rough with them, and all that kind of stuff, because, I'm not really, you know you'd be amazed how un-I-am into that stuff....

You're not?

Well I'm not, because if I was really going to do what part of me wants to do, it would be like, I mean, serious damage. I do not want to do that. I'm not into S&M. S&M is more ritualistic and it doesn't really have anything to do with it, you know? And I'm not interested in making others feel pain or anything. In *Frisk*, they all might as well be lying on surgical tables, they don't feel pain, he makes them not feel pain. He makes them lie absolutely still and not react. That's what he says, he says they don't react, they just lie there. In his imagination he's not interested in their suffering. He's only interested in exploring them.

I think a lot of the stuff in *Frisk*, and also in *Closer*, is actually pretty funny. Am I nuts?

No, not at all. It's supposed to be quite funny, it's very comedic. It's a way to work with that material, to make it accessible.

But I have a feeling a lot people don't get that joke.

Oh, a lot of people don't get that until they see me read. If readings go well, then they realize it, because they're usually pretty funny.

After I read *Closer*, one of the scenes

that stuck in my mind was John's art opening at the high school. It goes like this: "Among the students who came was a very drugged George. He took two wobbly steps into the room, tried to focus his eyes and groped around for the nearest wall." I thought that was hilarious. There are scenes like that all through, about people being drugged-out, that are very funny.

Well, they're funny, and they're all kinds of things. I mean, things that are funny can also be kind of horrifying at the same time, but that doesn't diminish the comedy.

Are Kevin from *Frisk* and George from *Closer* related, or the same person?

Well, they may be the same kind of archetype.

They're both really young and cute, and they twitch and tremble around a lot, and bruise themselves falling off beds.

Right. And they're both emotionally blocked in an extreme way. They both have bought into a certain kind of fantasy. George uses Disneyland as way to mediate pain and the way people treat him, and Kevin uses Tolkien. So in that way they're similar. Kevin's also a little like David the kid in *Closer* who thinks he's a pop star. And he's a lot healthier than George.

David gets smushed by that car at the end of *Closer*. But Kevin doesn't get smushed at the end of *Frisk*.

No, Kevin ends up being okay.

In fact, Dennis ends up with Kevin at the end of *Frisk*. Is that good, in terms of a fantasy ending, for you?

Sure.

At one point the Dennis character says, thinking about Kevin, it's "pre-desire, pre-violence." The fact that Kevin ends up staying with Dennis in Amsterdam, after his older brother Julian goes back to Paris—is that supposed to indicate something good happening? Is that a sign of healing?

[laughs] Well, it's not *bad*.

Did Kevin orchestrate some kind of healing for Dennis by setting up the mock re-creation of the snuff-porn photographs, those photos of the dead boy with a huge crater in his ass, that Dennis saw when he was thirteen and which really haunted him? That was Kevin's idea to do that, right, to kind of recreate the traumatic moment of Dennis' first seeing those pictures?

Yeah. Well that's his sort of funny notion of what would heal him. But I don't think that's supposed to be a healing. Kevin thinks that if you do this fake version of something, then maybe that will exorcise it. That's a pretty silly, sort of naïve notion. But it comes out of his own funny belief system, or whatever.

So it doesn't work for the Dennis character?

I think he takes comfort from it, because Kevin and he are very much alike. They both are more absorbed in fantasy life than real life. I didn't stress it, but there is a kind of parallel in the book, where they find a comfort, a kind of recognition, in each other.

Yeah, well, Kevin must be an ultimate sex object for Dennis. I mean, Dennis has gone through this huge crisis. So it seems, anyway. And, Kevin's so pretty, so sexy, he has that squarish, rounded-at-the-corners ass....

Well, he used to, anyway.

He probably still has some approxlmatlon.... [laughter] So, that's a great ending, isn't it, for Dennis?

It's not great—he has to live with this sort of tortured fantasy life or whatever. But it's not bad....

I just wanted to check if the idea is that he's doing some sort of breakthrough or healing with his whole crazy trip.

Oh no, I don't think either of them is going to get *better*, in some conventional sense. Anyway I think they're both perfectly fine—but I think they're both sort of screwed-up guys. But maybe by being in some sort of union, they can function and have a kind of understanding about each other, because neither one of them lives in the real world very well. But healing? No, it's more like a holding pattern.

Let's talk about sexual violence. There's a theory in *Frisk* that violent sex provides a kind of information.

Yeah.

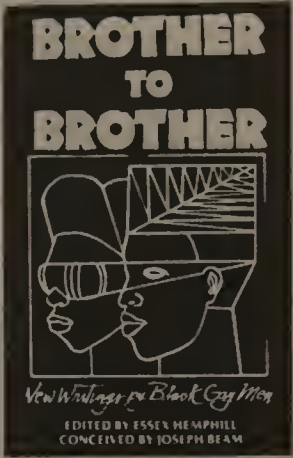
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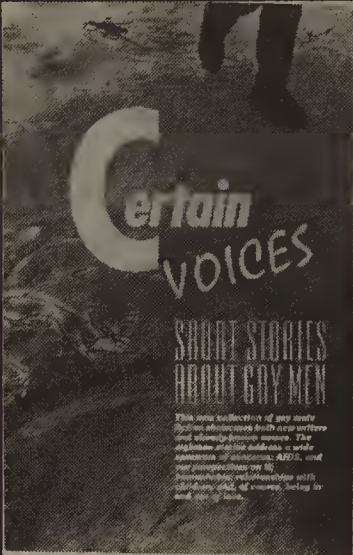


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BETTY

Continued from page 13

feeling slow witted at best, nervous and parched. The interview, at first, was nothing like the group's witty piece, "Martini Talk," with the three of them interweaving cocktail conversation and plinking imaginary olive pits for all of two minutes. No snappy, witty repartee coming at me from all directions. I didn't really offer much of my own either. I was glad in a way because I was simply not up to trying to keep up with who was saying what. I've seen them in action and, quite frankly, BETTY intimidated the hell out of me.

So, why was I so shaken? There's Alyson chomping on a Caesar salad with shrimp, yakking away between mouthfuls. Amy leaning on a table, chin in hand, sans chocolate, commenting occasionally and Bitzi off to the side, smoking a butt. Shit, they are going to make me work for this. Like when the twins, Amy and Bitzi, tell me Amy is a Sagittarius and Bitzi is a Pisces. Instead of chuckling at their dry sense o' humor or smiling and moving on, I make mistake number one. You do not *not* laugh when someone is amusing, especially your idols. Number two, you do not swear at them or mutter in a whiny high-pitched voice, "No, please, don't fuck with me...." I, unfortunately do. And that, for me, sets the tone for the rest of the interview. But BETTY are so nice about it all, which sets me off on a "Why are you being so nice to me?" thing.

I hook on that whole concept. How could they seem so nice and fun, even off stage? If the idea of recording your own album; on your own label; with you as your own distribution company; granting interviews to reporters who ask the same tired questions and still don't capitalize B-E-T-T-Y in their reviews; performing a killer show four nights a week; and still being nice and fun isn't the teeniest bit grumpy-making, what the hell is?

There are actually lulls and Trix lag-times filled with BETTY interjections. Alyson filling one of the many Trixynapse-gaps with blurts like, "Trixi?! Oddly enough, my favorite cereal is TRIX!"

"Is it?" I ask, grateful she's offered something non-threatening.

"Mmm hmm. Just jot that on down there. But only the red and yellow ones."

At the precise moment the comforting words jump out of Alyson's mouth, Bitzi offers, "My favorite movie right now is *Thelma and Louise*." Stupidly I mention I haven't seen it yet. "Are you kidding?! And you're a reporter?!" Alyson is aghast. I'm blowing it. My ears are beet red at this point, aflame with embarrassment. I decide to completely confess: "Actually, I'm not a reporter at the paper. I do the advertising...." Bitzi nails me with, "You begged for this one, didn't you?" I nod. "There you go." I hope they're dismissing my film faux pas. But they won't let it go. Alyson says, "Trixi, you *have* to go see it. Do not pass Go. It is so great. And we have to make it number one in the country." This is a directive from on-high, I think. If I don't see *Thelma and Louise* I will never have a true connection to BETTY.

By this time they're hitting their stride, trying to be BETTY, throwing things out. There's a stream of provocative puns and a delightful mix of innuendo and innocuous insights.

"Trixi, put down that Amy will do anything for money." This comes up just after Bitzi provides me with the one and only serious chunk of BETTY-speak. She says that putting out your own recording of your own material may cost quite a bit of money, but the end product is entirely your own.

Corporate sponsorship is not completely out of the question, however. Bitzi says, "It's really difficult, if not impossible right now in this culture to *not* be sponsored. Sponsorship is a double-edged sword, because in one way you need it and in the other way—"

"It's *sooo* tacky!" interrupts Alyson.

Bitzi continues, choosing her words carefully. "Most of the sponsorships now don't interfere with you creatively, but in a way you're sticking your name onto what they do politically. Which a lot of people truly don't believe in."

Alyson adds, "And there are a couple of things we will never, ever, *ever* be sponsored by unless they radically change their policies."

Amy requests, "Please put this down though: 'Amy will do anything for money.' I'm completely apolitical. And it goes out to the highest bidder."

It seems that BETTY would never succumb to that highest-bidder mentality. I hope that's just Amy-diva-banter. Bitzi seems the most vocal about the issue of artistic freedom and BETTY survival. "If people want people like us to continue in the

arts, because the government certainly isn't taking care of it...."

Alyson interrupts, "Ooh?! Political statement! Go girl!"

Bitzi continues, "Well, if people want to take care of people who are doing independent arts ... people who they believe in and people who they love and they want to follow ... then they want to help out. They have to support them by buying their records and going to their concerts, which is what people have been doing for us all along. Because if that support stops then people like us will no longer be able to do what we do."

Alyson, mentioning their compact disc, adds, "Plus, it's only fifteen dollars. Cheap."

Amy tacks on, "We don't have some big corporation behind us. It's just the BETTY machine. The BETTY party, rolling in and rolling out."

And how the party rolls! The gals put on a killer show that night, without the pause. That refreshes! The show is very unlike the interview. My feelings of connection finally come alive. I recognize Alyson's favorite song, "Fall," (which does not appear on their recording, *Hello BETTY*, chagrin-chagrin), the "little ditty that Bitzi wrote that changes every time we do it." True to her word, this funk-jam does seem a bit footloose and spontaneous but still has a thread wrapped around it tight. Of all the songs that appear on the recording, "Aftershock," written by Alyson, comes close to "Fall" with its funky bass-line.

Amy's "Bicycle" titillates a few with the opening line, "I just can't make up my mind which to ride. Boys or girls ... bicycles that is...." The spoken word pieces (including the spoken-yet-accompanied, "NYU"), are Amy's: dash-sprinkled throughout the show and the recording. They're short enough to provide a coasting cushion in the three G-Force frantic break-neck pace of the rest of their two sets. And they're interesting enough to keep you from getting too comfortable.

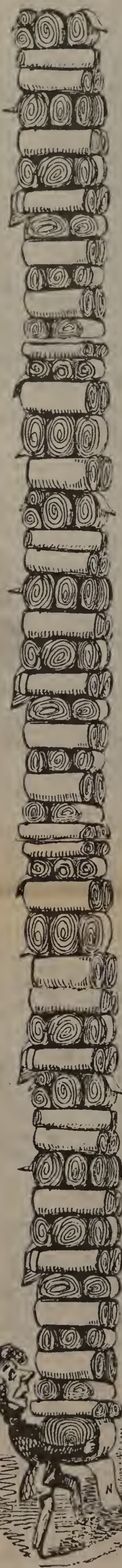
The *a cappella* songs they perform include their better known piece, "Go Ahead and Split, Mr. Amoeba Man," as well as my favorite, "First Date." The femme in me responds immediately to the bachelorette lament, "Well, I guess I shaved my legs for nothing...."

BETTY segues effortlessly from the seemingly apolitical to the playful "Shrinkback." This one's a frenzied, nearly shouted number, with Amy on cello. Trying hard to avoid comparing this tune to anything known in the pop world, I still think of Echo and the Bunnymen's "Never Stop." "Shrinkback" also includes BETTY's only (as far as I could hear) overt reference to the queer community: "Sex with a married man ... fun with an African ... tea with a lesbian ... come and get the flavor of the week ... come and taste your sweet creamy treat." And again, at the end, Amy going on and on, "Lez be friends, c'mon lez be friends..." sawing away at the cello. Kind of perks a dyke gal up.

BETTY is almost too much for one band and definitely too much for one fan to take. I'll be their geek "lez be" friend any ol' time. □

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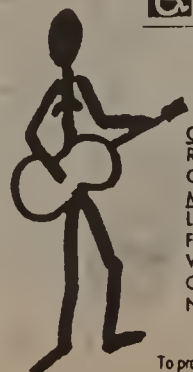
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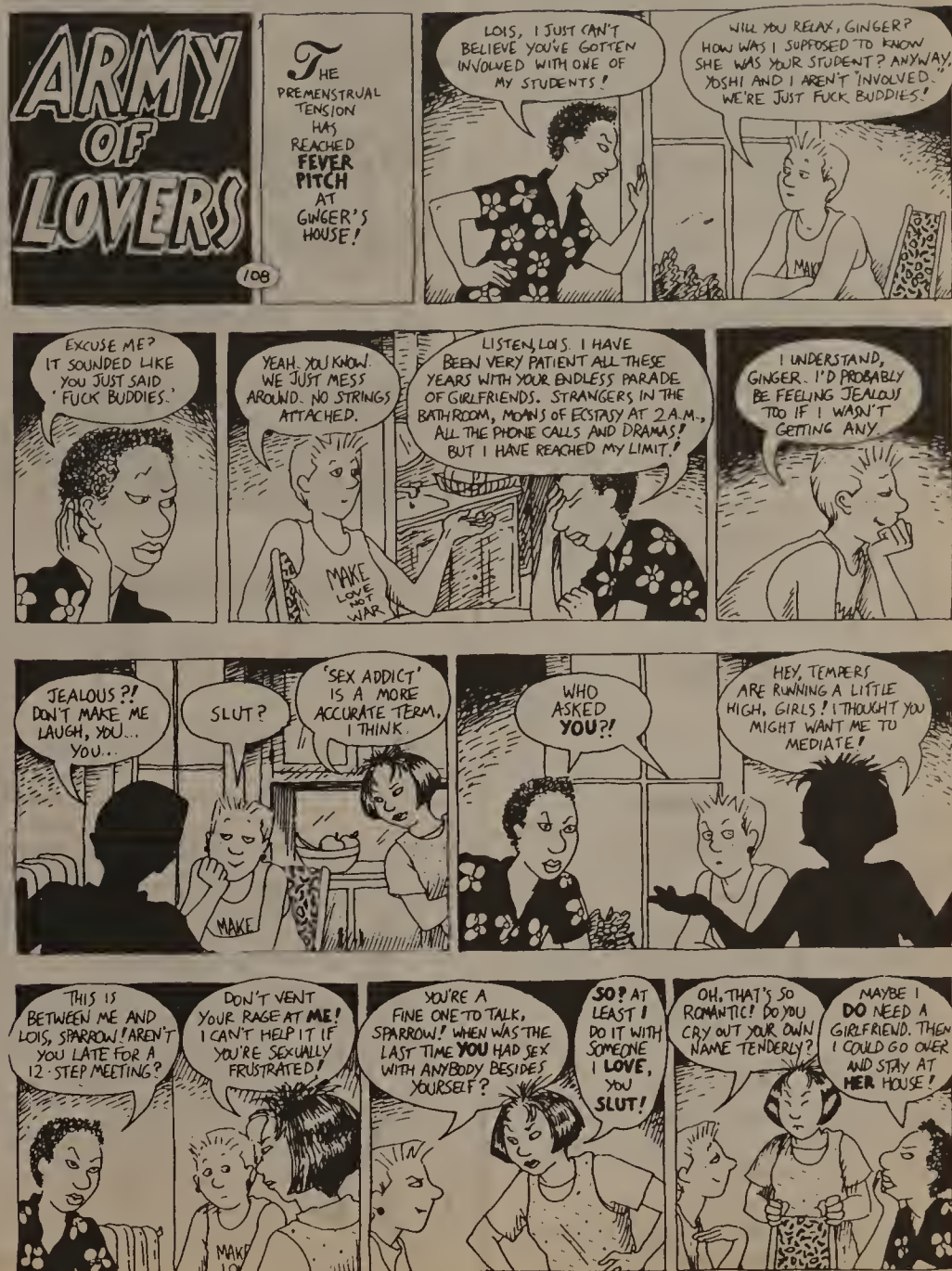
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Cooper

Continued from page 8

The character Joe talks about this. He says: "I guess I'm self destructive. Except I don't see it that way. Because I tend to experience things, even weird things like violence, as forms of information about what or who I am physically." And then later Dennis gets the gorgeous porn star Pierre into his hotel room. He tells Pierre about the information theory. The smell of Pierre's crotch: "That's Information." But then Dennis takes it much further. He says, "...logging your tastes, smells, sounds, textures isn't enough somehow... I want to know everything about you. But to really do that, I'd have to kill you, as bizarre as that sounds." So, it seems like, for Dennis, to kill a boy is a way of finding out some kind of ultimate truth about that boy?

Well, he has an idea that it could be. He doesn't ever do it, so he doesn't know.

Well why would he want to do it? I mean, he's possessed by the idea of doing it.

Well, I mean, why? But then there's the trip that sets it off, the photographs that were overwhelming to him....

Did that happen to you? In your life, when you were 13?

In my real life it was de Sade. I read de Sade when I was young. And I wondered if it wasn't real—if there wasn't a place you could go, a world where you could do that. So I was confused and then I grew up and I realized, "Oh. This is fiction. People don't do that and there's no place like that."

You saw snuff photographs? Dead-boy-with-crater-in-ass?

I never saw snuff photographs. But, I wanted to use a visual image.

It's very powerful. It certainly works.

Well, you know, I've always liked visual pornography more than written pornography. I like to see it—my imagination works better off photographs than off text.

Ok, I just have to ask, because I'm quite curious—what is it in concept about disemboweling a beautiful boy that provides information about that boy? It reminds me of entrail reading or something. I mean, it's as though there's a revelation—looking at the guts.

Well, it's more complicated than that. I mean, Christianity is a lie, Freud was a bullshit artist, it's all theory, and why should we believe any of it? And they're all conflicting, it's all a bunch of chaos, why should we believe any of these theories? I can only believe what I see and what I feel, that's the idea.

So I'm basically going to start from square one and figure it out for myself, that's the narrator's idea. He looks at himself, and he feels this incredible desire. And it's for another guy, a certain kind of boy, and so what is that boy? That boy is what he sees, which is his body. And so, if this guy rejects the notion of any kind of spiritual life or whatever, then it's like people become what they are, which is their bodies. And if someone has this power over you, you're like a child. You want to understand, to take it apart like a toy, to find out what it is. So in a way it's like that—there's this beautiful boy—and in a way he wishes he could stop this power the boy has over him, and feel, like, more in control of himself, or less dependent on those people he's attracted to, if he could kill them. Because first of all, he would stop them from existing, which would stop that power. Second of all, he would open them up and he would see—what props it up, what makes it work, what exudes the sweat through it. It's basically like that. It's a real pragmatic and simple kind of thing.

Dennis tells Pierre in the hotel room in New York: "I think of it as religious. Like insane people say they've seen God. I saw God in those pictures, and when I imagine dissecting you, say, I begin to feel that way again. It's physical, mental, emotional." Is one way to explain it that it's partly an aesthetic thing? Like capturing a memory—for Proust, cookies, for you, blood, guts, gore?

Oh, I mean, yeah, in a way it is.

Or is it really about possession, more than about information?

Oh, no, it's about both. Possession's part of it, but it's a combination of both. The body is a kind of information—and if you kill them, then you possess them—it's both. It's wanting to stop this thing that makes you feel this way.

I totally accept that I've had these ideas. I mean, you know, it's a book, it's not autobiography. It's fiction. But I'm willing to accept responsibility for that narrator.

What is that thing that makes you feel this way?

Desire.

Desire? Okay, with sex, you can be rough, and it's exciting, and you roll around and maybe bang each other up a little, and that's sort of violent. But, taking it many steps ahead, to killing somebody....

Yeah, see, I don't think there's a relationship between violent sex and this. That's what I mean,—it's really like surgery. I mean, he thinks of it as surgery.

But it's sexualized.

Sure! It's because he feels desire, it comes out of his groin, he gets hard, when he thinks about it. Sure, it is sexualized.

Surgeons don't usually get hard ons. Or maybe they do.

No, no. Well I don't know if they do or not. But it's not like he wants to *commune* with them, or anything. I mean, I think he's too alienated and disassociated from his *own* body. He talks about how his body is just this thing, that follows him around like a trailer, you know? I mean he's really detached, and he's very mental. He doesn't understand his own body; it barely comes into play except for like the hands and the mouth, and the nose.

Now is this true of you? Or is this made up?

It's fiction, it's not *true*.

Except there's a quality of confession about *Frisk*—since the protagonist is Dennis—who is you, presumably...

Mm-hmm.

Or no? Maybe not of confession, but of, "Can you take it? This is me, can you take it?"

Yeah, well I totally accept that I've had these ideas. I mean, you know, it's a book, it's not autobiography. It's fiction. But I'm willing to accept responsibility for that narrator, yeah. □

Part two of this interview will appear next week in the GCN Book Review.

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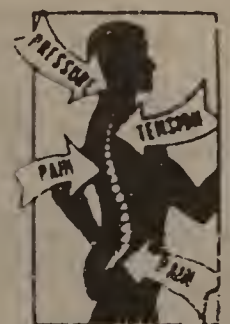
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PORTER SQUARE

LF seeks reliable roommate (25+) to share E-Z going household. Washer/Dryer. Nice yard. \$250+ util a must see. Call 628-1868 (lin)

Newtonville. 2 LF's seek LF, friendly, responsible to share large house semi-coop, fireplace, yard, no smoke drugs, alcohol. \$350 plus including half bath 965-0648. (46)

ALLSTON

4 LF looking for 2 more to share sober, semi-coop household. Lots of space, HW floors, porch, garden. Near T, bus, Boston Food Coop. \$254+. Avail. Aug 1. 254-0448. (48)

LARGE ROOM/PRIV. BATH

Newly decorated BR, priv bath, 2 large closets share LR, DR, EIK, W/D near Ashmont T. Avail immediately \$325+ util. 265-7220. Lv. Msg. (48)

Inman Square

1 LF seeks 2 for 3 bedroom, sunny easy-going apt. Great location, landlord, and yard. Near Bus and Central Sq. T. Cats negotiable. Rent \$283, includes heat & hot water. Call Sarah, 776-5537

APARTMENTS

NEAR TUFTS—MEDFORD

5 room apt. on quiet street in 2 family house; deck + garden, ceiling fans, refrig, W/D, storage; cats welcome; great owners; avail 7/1 \$750+ util; call 617-391-0532 (48)

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Sunny, breezy, bayview, secure 2 BR. Wood floors, wood stove, private porches, backyard. Jones Hill, near Savin Hill Red Line and JFK/UMass. \$800, available 8/1. 288-9136. (48)

MEDFORD

2 BR in L occup 3 DKR 2 prchs, parking, yard, share W/D, \$650+ 7/1. 391-4515 (47)

MEETING HOUSE HILL

Renovated large 1 BR with huge closets, W/D, porch, garden. Gay owner occupied. \$550, incl all utilities. 265-5653

APARTMENT FOR RENT

4+ rooms, pets OK, yard, small woodstove, nice view, ceiling fan, pkg, near T, 3-fam, LF owner occup. \$550+ util, \$250 S. Dep, Malden, 324-6822 (V. 18. No. 2)

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JP APT

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Lynn Shore area—walk to beach, immaculate 2BR, 2 bath, fully appl. kitchen, WW, A/C, patio. Available 8/1. \$700+ utilities. (617)-581-7119 (Vol. 19, I. 1)

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ROSLINDALE

Quiet area, spacious 2 bedroom, living, dining room, kitchen, refrigerator, bathroom, sunroom/study, backporch, backyard, hardwood floors. Near T. Available July 1 \$725. Call 1-344-7545. (48)

DORCHESTER, POPES HILL

Three rooms, hwd flrs, mod. bath, 1st floor, owner occupied. \$500 plus utilities. Call (617) 436-0970. (V. 19, 1)

GAY OWNED 2 FAMILY

Dorchester lg. 3 br, FD, living room, large eat in, kitchen, hdwd fl, large rear deck, W/D ample street parking, plenty of storage. Old Victorian charm close to T. Owner occupied. Avail Sept. 1st. \$900+. For more info contact Charles or David. 265-8678 (49)

Somerville, Davis Square. Gorgeous, sunny 2-3 bedroom apt. w/hardwood floors. Close to T. buses. W/D. Share garden. \$950+util/month plus sec. dep. Avail. July 1 or ASAP. 625-1656 (48)

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PRISONERS SEEKING FRIENDS

LAYOUT DATE: 6/20/91
FREE SEX!!!!!!

Ok, now that I have your attention, we need DICTIONARIES (again) (sigh)...And we always will, so the refrain goes (and it's true!) Think of keeping an eye out for cheap dictionaries as your way of fulfilling your fantasy fo being an English teacher. (Believe me, they're important 'tools' for many prisoners.)

I need someone to write to. About love, sex, romantic dinners, roller-skating. Love to meet interesting people. Arthur H. English, 206751-B-10, Box B, Anamosa IA 52205 I need help to form a new penpal club to match prisoners to someone in the free world. Free to lesbians/gays. Send your name, address, likes & dislikes. Write Kenneth H. Lingar, 286652 IMU C7, Box 520, Walla Walla, WA 99362

Intelligent prisoner seeks sincere friendship or relationship. Have a lot of love to give, no one to receive it. Dewayne Gwynes 179-432, Box 45699, Lucasville OH 45699 I'm in confinement & have little contact with anyone. Looking for men to write to for moral support. Ralph Rodriguez, D-13258, SHU-4A4R-58L, Box 3476, Corcoran CA 93212

I need a good friend. I don't have any hangups about age, race or sex. Please write me. Gregory Willisam, D-23871-4A-1L-50, Box 3456, Corcoran CA 93212

I'm fun-loving yet serious, searching for a relationship. Sorry, can't write to to other prisoners. Will answer all letters. Gary Lee McDonald, 82306, STar Rt Box 22-B (1 Bks) Tucker AR 72168

I would like to hear from gays from allover. Not crazy about drugs. Charles C. Finken Jr, 65912, ASPC-T-Rincon, 10,000 S. Wilmot Rd, Tucson AZ 85777

GM would like to have a penpal from Boston, S.F. or Seattle. I like motorcyces, hot sex, swimming nude. Mike Kammerzell, Box 514-161115, Granite OK 73547

GM looking for friends or fun. I like running, chess, reading, classical music. Cannot write other prisoners. I really need someone. Roger Hampton, 02564-032, Box 33, Terre Haute IN 47808

Bi M needs crossdressers, TV/TS, or Bi women to write. Looking for some real people for friendship. Leslie Hattey, Rt 1, Box 36, Jackson N.C. 27845

GM seeks a lasting friendship, possible relationship. Enjoy swimming, horseback, just having fun. John Finky, 475781, Rt 4, Box 1200, Rosharon TX 77583

Athletic M seeks free world friends. Please write James Reed Harris 17678-086, Box 1000, Leavenworth KS 66048

I'm just writing in concern for all the people with AIDS who feel like there is nothing to live for. Don't give up, and stay strong and live long! To give up would be to tell all the people on the street who are raising the issue and looking for a cure that it is a worthless cause. Anyone who would like to write a letter of encouragement can write Kenny Lingar 286652, IMU C7, Box 520, Walla Walla WA 99362

BM, witty, full of spunk, poet, can be the object of some lucky effeminate's desire. Please send photos. James E. Robinson, 193-225, Box 45699, Lucasville OH 45699.

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WOMEN SEEKING FRIENDS



Lesbian will answer all females, including other prisoners. Dazzle me with your feminine charms. I enjoy intelligent conversation & a good sense of humor. Into music, reading, art. Ramona Barry, TCI, N-7139, Ct. Hwy K, Fond du Lac WI 54935

OFF OUR BACKS, a women's liberation journal of new and features, is free to women in prison. Write them at OOB, 2423 18th St, NW, Wash. DC 20009

BOOKS FOR WOMEN!

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GM looking for someone compassionate and caring on the outside who wants a lasting relationship. Also looking for job contact in gay community in S.F. I like to dress up and play the female role. Michael Scott Brotzman, 151050, Box 7-3A-701, Moberly MO 65270

I like to sing, fish, camp and go to movies, stay at home with that right person. I am a slave also. Please write me: John Lowe, 09194-074, B-Unit-FDC, Box 621639, Littleton CO 60162

Homosexual prisoner looking for penpals, especially men, if possible in the N. Calif. area. HarryMemmo, D-22902, Box 7500, Crescent City CA 95531 (D-6-218)

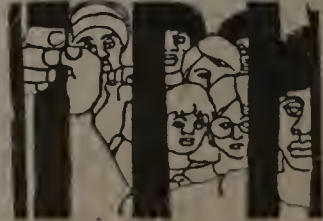
Bi male, very well-endowed, prefer TV/TS "you, not me!" Like to cook, work hard, released in August to San Diego. Will send photo, exchange letters. J.D. Simpson, Box 60403, Tamal CA 94974

I'm looking for a penpal and possible sponsor to help me get out on parole. I've been closeted most of my life, but now feel really comfortable with myself. I want to share feelings wiht someone honest. Theodore Darcy, 080783, mailbox G-38, Box 50, Polk City FL 33868

BM would love to write to TV/TS queens who will send pictures and love to a lonely guy. Will answer all. Tony atkins, 560931, Rt. 2, Box 20, Midway TX 75852

GM to be released in August looking for a place to make a start. Trade rent & board for work. I do home construction. If you have space in your heart & home, I'm your man. Philip Gillespie, 67480, u/30/D, Parchman MS 38738

This lonely prisoner wishes to correspond with men of the free world for friendship/possible relationship. I'm very sincere. Dana Morrison, 157-449, Box 45699, Lucasville OH 45699



What I'm looking for are you "shorties"--if you've been denied by other gays because you're too short, I'm your man. I like active sex, all outdoor activities. Daryl Buckingham, 400408, RT 4, Box 1200, Rosharon TX 77583

CABLE

July 6, Cambridge ♦ Adult Children of Heterosexuals, is a new, hard-edged cabaret band that presents original song blended with the high camp and raucous humor for which Boston-based performer and Adults co-creator Abe Rybeck has become widely known. They will be appearing with the Caribbean rhythm dance band Tigresa at Nightstage 823 Main St. 8pm \$10. Call (617) 931-2000 to charge by phone. Pictured night: Adult Children of Heterosexuals

Calendar listings must be received by the Monday before the week of the event. Photos encouraged! Please specify if event is or is not wheelchair accessible and/or sign language interpreted. Please use our format as a guide for listings. All listings must be typed. Please note that listings are printed only as space allows; we regret that we cannot print every submission. No phone calls, please!

Phone numbers listed are in the 617 area code, and non-major cities are in Massachusetts, unless otherwise noted.

29 SATURDAY

Boston ♦ Bicycling Lesbians Around Boston. Info: Linda 524-6996.

New York ♦ 10th Annual Gay Pride Run. 5 miles. Central Park. 9:30 a.m. Info: Front Runners NY (212) 724-9700.

Cambridge ♦ Lesbian Couples Group: "The Ecstasy and the Agony: Being a Lesbian Couple in the Heterosexual World." Women's Ctr., 46 Pleasant St. 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. 354-8807.

Jamaica Plain ♦ Lauri Goldsmith and Sue Krantz in Concert. 8 p.m. Crone's Harvest, 761 Centre St. 983-9530.

Keene, NH ♦ "Two of Hearts," music and dancing to benefit Monadnock AIDS Project and NH Gay Info Line. \$7. Spons. by Monadnock Area Womyn. 9 p.m. Keene Unitarian Univ. Church, 69 Washington St. (603) 357-5757.

30 SUNDAY

N. Brookfield ♦ Chiltern Mtn. Club Bike Ride. Info: Gloria 547-0053.

Townsend ♦ Gaylaxians (New England L/G/B science fiction and fantasy fans) Monthly Mtg. 1 p.m. Rides available. Info: write to Gaylaxians, POB 1059, Boston 02103.

Boston ♦ AMALGM Monthly Men's Meeting. (AMALGM = Assoc. of Mass. Asian L/GM.) Last Sunday each month. The Center, 338 Newbury St., room 202K. Info: 247-2927.

Boston ♦ Dykes Dialogue: "Dating Before Commitment." 4 p.m. L/G Comm. Ctr., 338 Newbury St. 247-2927.

Provincetown ♦ Reception for Lambda Literary Award Winners Kenny Fries and Louise Ralkin. 6 to 7:30 p.m. Now Voyager, 357 Commercial St. (508) 487-0848.

JULY 1 MONDAY

Amherst ♦ Kaleidoscope Monthly Mtg. Older L/G/B and friends. Topic: Gayla XII. 6:30 to 9 p.m. Bangs Comm. Ctr., Boltwood Walk. Info: Corrie (413) 525-2188, Warren (413) 586-4277, or Dave (413) 773-3092.

Hanover, NH ♦ Panelmaking Workshops for the AIDS Memorial Quilt. First and third Mondays each month. Lutheran Church, 5 Summer St. 7 p.m. Info: Thom (603) 632-4145.

Boston ♦ Queer Nation / Boston. Community Church of Boston, Copley Square above Back Bay Bistro. 7:30 p.m., first and third Mondays each month. Info: 577-8123.

2 TUESDAY

Boston ♦ Tefilat Refuat Hanefesh, "Service for the Healing of the Soul." Jewish patients with longterm medical conditions. Temple Israel, Longwood Ave. and Plymouth St. First Tuesday each month. 566-3960.

Framingham ♦ Framingham G/L Youth Group. People 22 and under, meets first and third Tuesdays each month. Civic League Bldg., 214 Concord St. 6 to 7:30 p.m. Info: write P.O. Box 426, S. Framingham, MA 01701.

Boston ♦ Support group for lesbian and single women interested or involved in alternative insemination. 7 to 8:30 p.m. Second flr. conf. rm., FCHC, 7 Haviland St. Info: Jenifer Firestone 267-0900.

Boston ♦ Gay Fathers of Greater Boston. First and third Tuesday each month. Lindemann Center, 2nd fl. 8 to 10 p.m. Info 742-7897.

3 WEDNESDAY

Concord, NH ♦ Lesbian Health Clinic. First Wednesday each month. 5 to 9 p.m. Full gyn services. Appt. or more info: Randie (603) 225-2739.

Boston ♦ NAMES Project/Boston General Mtg. First Wednesday each month. 7 p.m. Piemonte Rm., City Hall (Congress St. entrance).

Somerville ♦ B/L/G Rights Activists of Somerville (BLGRAS) Monthly Meeting. First Wednesday each month. 7 p.m. Info: 666-9288 or 628-9650.

Worcester ♦ Supporters of Worcester Area G/L Youth. Open to G/L/B youth 21 and under. First and third Wednesday each month. United Congregational

Church, 6 Institute Rd. 7p.m. Info: (508)755-0005.

Cambridge ♦ Lesbians Play Monopoly. 8 p.m. DOB, Old Camb. Baptist Church, 1151 Mass. Ave. \$1. 661-3633.

4 THURSDAY

Boston ♦ Cape Verdean Independence Celebration. City Hall Plaza. 2 to 6 p.m. Food and Cape Verdean Artifacts!

Northampton ♦ Valley Gay Alliance. First and third Thursdays each month. Basement of the Unitarian Church, 22 Main St. 7:30p.m. (413) 527-5310.

5 FRIDAY

Provincetown ♦ Defend the "Spiritus Two." Join the ACLU and others in defending Patti Latz and Mike Mammone who will stand trial on Aug. 2. Help organize a benefit, media outreach, etc. Spiritus Pizza. Commercial St. For more info: (508) 487-4452.

Boston ♦ Friday Night Video Series at the Center: "Law of Desire." 7 p.m. \$2 suggested. 338 Newbury St. 2nd flr. 247-2927.

Cambridge ♦ Lesbians Age 50+ Discuss Joys of Life. (Gripe Night was last month!) 8 p.m. DOB, Old Camb. Baptist Church, 1151 Mass. Ave. \$1. 661-3633.

6 SATURDAY

Cambridge ♦ Adult Children of Heterosexuals, is a new, hard-edged cabaret band that presents original song blended with the high camp and raucous humor for which Boston-based performer and Adults co-creator Abe Rybeck has become widely known. They will be appearing with the Caribbean rhythm dance band Tigresa at Nightstage 823 Main St. 8pm \$10. Call (617) 931-2000 to charge by phone.

7 SUNDAY

Cambridge ♦ Lesbian Writers' Group. 1 to 3 p.m. DOB, Old Camb. Baptist Church, 1151 Mass. Ave. \$1. 661-3633.

Provincetown ♦ Jaye Maiman signs "I Left My Heart," a lesbian mystery. 4 p.m. Now Voyager, 357 Commercial St. (508) 487-0848.

Dorchester ♦ Dorchester GALA Potluck. David's home. 7 p.m. Info: Barry 288-1847 or Hotline 825-3737.

Boston ♦ Boston Bisexual Men's Network. First Sunday of each month. The Center, 338 Newbury St. 8 p.m. Info: 247-6683.

Somerville ♦ GLOSS: G/L of Somerville and Surroundings. Monthly potluck. 71 Union Sq, 6 p.m. First Sunday each month. Info: Lisa, 628-2532.

Beverly ♦ North Shore L/G Parenting Support Group. First Sunday each month. First Parish Unitarian Church. 225 Cabot St. 6:30 to 8 p.m. Info: 593-5252.

9 TUESDAY

Boston ♦ Boston Coalition for Black L/G's. Second Tuesday each month. Harriet Tubman House, 566 Columbus Ave. (Mass. Ave. & Columbus). 6:30 p.m. Info: David 424-6989.

Boston ♦ Support group for lesbian and single women interested or involved in alternative insemination. 7 to 8:30 p.m. Second floor conference room, FCHC, 7 Haviland St. Info: Jenifer Firestone 267-0900.

Arlington ♦ Parents and Friends of L/G's. Second Tuesday each month at First Parish Unitarian Church, 630 Mass. Ave. 7:15 p.m. Info: 547-2440 or (508)562-5807.

N. Truro ♦ Healing Service For All Those Affected By AIDS. Christian Union Church, Route 6A. 628-7665.

10 WEDNESDAY

Boston ♦ Mass. G/L Political Caucus Monthly Membership Mtg. 6:30 p.m. Arlington Street Church (use the Boylston St. entrance).

Cambridge ♦ Lavender Alliance General Mtg. 7 to 9 p.m. Cambridge Rindge & Latin School, Media Cafeteria. 868-1693.

Boston ♦ Coming Out Support Group. The Center, 338 Newbury St. Second and fourth Wednesday each month. 8 p.m. Info: 247-2927.

11 THURSDAY

Boston ♦ The Coalition for L/G Civil Rights. Meets every other Thursday. The Center, rm 202K. 338 Newbury St. 6:30 to 8p.m. Info: David 828-3039.

Dorchester ♦ G/L Concerns Committee of SEIU Local 509. Second Thursday each month. Union office, 5 Howard Johnson Plaza. 6:30 p.m. Info: 282-2509.

Boston ♦ FCHC Living Well Series: HIV Medical Forum. Second Thursday each month. 7 to 9 p.m. BLC, 140 Clarendon St. 7th floor. Info: Rob 267-0900.

Dorchester ♦ Dorchester GALA Business Mtg. 7 to 9



p.m. Geiger Gibson Heath Ctr., 250 Mt. Vernon St. Info: Barry 288-1847 or Hotline 825-3737.

Boston ♦ GLAAD: Boston Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation. General meeting second Thursday each month. The Center rm. 202, 338 Newbury St. 8 p.m. Info: 492-4639.

Westborough ♦ Jack Veasey. Harrisburg poet who has written standup material for Joan Rivers. Old Vienna Kaffeehaus, 22 South St. 8 p.m. open mic., 9:15 p.m. show. (508) 898-2230.

12 FRIDAY

Boston ♦ Friday Night Video Series at the Center: "Lianna." 7 p.m. \$2 suggested. 338 Newbury St. 2nd flr. 247-2927.

SATURDAYS

Boston ♦ Frontrunners. Meet at Metropolitan Health Club for 2 to 5-mi. run along Charles. Lockers and showers complimentary. 10 a.m. Also: Tues. 12:15 p.m. at MHC; Wed. 6:45 p.m. at Hatch Shell. 282-0013.

Cambridge ♦ Single Mothers' Support Group. Free drop-in group with child care, alternate Saturdays. Women's Center. 46 Pleasant St. 11am-12:30 p.m. 354-8807.

Boston ♦ Pink Flamingos. TV/TS of New England. 4 to 6p.m. 338 Newbury St., 2nd flr. 247-2927.

Boston TV ♦ PrideTime—Boston G/L TV, with Cynthia Pape. 7:30 p.m. Boston Neighborhood Network, channels A3 and A8. Also on Cambridge Cable Channel 19, 7 p.m. Tuesdays, and on other systems; check your listings.

Jamaica Plain ♦ Women's Coffeehouse. Musical entertainment, usually. 8 p.m. Crone's Harvest, 761 Centre St. \$5 suggested donation. 983-9530.

SUNDAYS

Boston ♦ Different Strokes Swim Team. Coached workouts for swimmers of all abilities. 10:15 at Boston City Hosp. swimming pool. Ed 767-0449.

Boston ♦ Boston Alliance of G/L Youth (BAGLY) Drop-In Center. St. John the Evangelist Church, 35 Bowdoin. (800) 42BAGLY.

Boston ♦ Work Issues Support Group. 2 to 4 p.m. G/L Comm. Ctr., 338 Newbury St.

Boston ♦ Boston Strikers Soccer Club. Weekly novice and club scrimmages. All levels. 3 p.m. Info: Erik 423-0929 or Jeff 876-7612.

Cambridge ♦ Lesbian Sports. Magazine Field, Memorial Dr. Spons. by DOB. Softball 4 to 6 p.m.; volleyball 6 p.m. 'til dark. \$1. Info: Steph 625-9551.

Boston ♦ Dignity Mass. Liturgy followed by a social hour. St. John the Evangelist Church, 35 Bowdoin St. 5:30 p.m. 536-6518.

Boston ♦ ALATEEN Group open to L/G/B youth 22 and under. 338 Newbury Street, rm. 202k. 6pm-7:30 p.m. Info: Dave 629-2518 or Frank 666-8912.

Boston ♦ Metropolitan Community Church Worship/Fellowship. 131 Cambridge St. (near Gov't Ctr.). 7 p.m. Info: Rev. Tanis 437-0420.

Boston ♦ Narcotics Anonymous. L/GM. The Center, 338 Newbury St. 8 p.m. 247-2927.

Boston ♦ The Gay Dating Show, WUNR 1600AM. 10:30pm-2:30 a.m.

MONDAYS

Boston ♦ Positive Directions. Peer-led support group for HIV+ people. Boston Living Center, 140 Clarendon. 12:25 p.m. 262-3456.

Boston ♦ Chiltern Downhill Skiing Lessons. Monday nights at Nashoba Valley ski area. Info: Jim 843-3966.

Boston ♦ Monday Night Dinners for PWA's and Friends: about 100 people meeting every Monday at AAC for dinner. No reservations required. 6 p.m. AAC, 131 Clarendon St. 437-6200.

Dorchester ♦ Alcoholics Anonymous. First Parish Church, Meeting House Hill. Beginners 6:30, hardhats 8 p.m.

Boston ♦ Boston Bisexual Women's Network Coordinating Comm. The Center, 338 Newbury St. 247-2927.

Worcester ♦ AIDS Project Worcester. A support group for family, friends, concerned others dealing with HIV. 305 Shrewsbury St. 7-8:30 p.m. (508)755-3773.

Boston ♦ Northern Lights Alternatives Monday Night Rap Group. Talk to others living with HIV. 38 Appleton St. 7:30-9 p.m. Info: Ann O'Rourke 694-0964.

Cambridge ♦ Lesbian Rap Group. The Women's Center. 46 Pleasant St. 8-10 p.m. 354-8807.

Cable TV ♦ "Between Takes." Often a G/L slant on events. Boston A3 Mondays 9:30 p.m. Cambridge CCTV Thursdays 8:30 p.m. Rhode Island Interconnect

A Fridays 8:30 p.m. Other areas: check listings.

TUESDAYS

Providence, RI ♦ ACT UP/Rhode Island. Call for meeting place (401) 461-4191.

Gloucester ♦ Healing Circle/Positively Clean and Sober. Healing circle 6:30 to 8 p.m., open to anyone facing chronic or life-threatening illness. 8 to 9 p.m., for people living with HIV and dealing with subst. abuse issues. N. Shore AIDS Project, 19 Pleasant St. (508) 283-0101.

Boston ♦ ACT UP/Boston. The Living Center, YWCA, 140 Clarendon St. 7 p.m. 49-ACTUP.

Cambridge ♦ Bisexual Women's Rap. The Women's Center. 46 Pleasant St. 7-8:30. 354-8807.

Worcester ♦ Support Group for HIV+ G/B Men and Their Significant Others. Closed meeting. AIDS Project Worcester. 305 Shrewsbury St. 7-8:30 p.m. (508) 755-3773.

Boston ♦ L/G Freedom Trail Band Rehearsals. No audition necessary. Mass College of Art, Longwood and Brookline Ave. 7:15 p.m. 266-0628.

WEDNESDAYS

Boston ♦ Sales Networks Program for G/L Business Owners and Supporters of the Community. 7:30 to 9:30 a.m. The Center, 338 Newbury St., 2nd flr. Registration required: Marc Spencer 262-2400.

Hyde Park ♦ Women's Pick-Up Hockey. MDC Hyde Park Rink (near Dedham). 8 to 9 a.m. Info: Janice 326-1600 x350.

Boston ♦ Boston Alliance of G/L Youth (BAGLY). Open to youth age 22 and under. 35 Bowdoin St. New persons' meeting 6p.m. women and men meet separately 6:45 to 7:30; general meeting 7:30p.m. (800) 42BAGLY.

Cambridge ♦ Lesbian Al-Anon. Wheelchair accessible. Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 6:30 to 8 p.m. 354-8807.

Springfield ♦ Names Project Meeting. New chapter with weekly quilting meetings. All welcome. Frontier. 19 Pearl St. 7 to 10 p.m. (413)788-7459

Worcester ♦ Supporters of Worcester Area G/L Youth (SWAGLY). Social support group for youths 22 and under. 7 to 9 p.m. United Congregational Church, 6 Institute Road. 7 to 9 p.m. (508) 755-0005.

Boston ♦ Bisexual Adult Children of Alcoholics. Mass. General Hospital. 7:30 p.m. Info: Marge 259-1559.

Boston ♦ Positive Directions. Peer-led support group for HIV+ people. Boston Living Center, 140 Clarendon. 7:30 p.m. 262-3456.

Bridgewater ♦ S. Shore G/L Alliance. 7:30 to 9 p.m. Bridgewater Ctr. Primarily a social group of age 25+, but all welcome. Info: Glen 293-5183 or Dave 294-0367.

Worcester ♦ Support Group for HIV+ who are in Substance Abuse Recovery. Closed meeting. AIDS Project Worcester. 305 Shrewsbury St. 7:30 to 9 p.m. (508) 755-3773.

THURSDAYS

Boston ♦ Boston Area Rape Crisis Center drop-in group for women who have been raped. 492-RAPE.

Boston ♦ Names Project Quilting Bee—for the AIDS Memorial Quilt. Sewing supplies and support provided. Boston Living Ctr., 140 Clarendon St. 7th flr. 7 to 9 p.m. Info 451-9003.

Cambridge ♦ Drop In at DOB Coffee Night. 7 to 9:30 p.m. Old Camb. Baptist Church, 1151 Mass. Ave. \$1. 661-3633.

Portsmouth, NH ♦ Out and About. A lesbian social and support group. Info: Keryn (603) 749-5852.

Boston ♦ Positive Directions. Peer-led support group for HIV+ people. Boston Living Center, 140 Clarendon. 7:30 p.m. 262-3456.

Provincetown ♦ Positive PWA Coalition Weekly Rap Session. 7:30. 155 Bradford St. Peer led. (508) 487-3998.

Boston ♦ The Group. Discussion and social hour. The Center, 338 Newbury St. 266-1129.

Boston ♦ L/G Ice Hockey Practices and Intersquad Scrimmages. All levels. 9 p.m. Grrr Bos. rink. Info: John 350-6063, Al 522-1408.

Cambridge ♦ GAMIT Study Break. (GAMIT = Gays at MIT.) GAMIT lounge, room 50-306, 142 Memorial Dr.

FRIDAYS

Watertown ♦ GLOW: G/L of Watertown. 395-4664.

Boston ♦ GCN Friday Night Stuffing Party. Come stuff the paper, eat pizza, and make new friends. GCN, 62 Berkeley St. 5 p.m. 426-4469.

Boston ♦ Friday Night At The Movies. Boston Living Center. 140 Clarendon St. Free. 7 p.m. 236-1012.

Last week, we brought you a list of BETTY's secret, personal, intimate Fave Raves. This week we proudly present BETTY: The interview.

By Trixi Sansabra

Like as it may seem, I've had a crush on BETTY for nearly three years now. It was a confirmed crush right after I figured that the other Betty in my life was hopelessly and incurably straight. One deliciously decadent sunny afternoon in front of HBO did it. That day I found something delightful ... it was BETTY. They were on what appeared to be a children's show, *Encyclopedia*. The late, great Ethyl Eichelberger also appeared and for some reason, I still questioned whether or not the program was for normal adults.

There was BETTY, doing a song called "Echo," that was clever and snappy and fun. The three-girl-band caused a flashback to Saturday mornings of *Josie and the Pussycats*, but BETTY was better: real musicians, real singers. Later on I would learn that they were sisters Amy and Bitzi Ziff and Alyson Palmer. But on this show I had to rely on what my gut told me. You could tell they must practice a lot and they probably did theatre or something. They were strong, self-confident and with a tinge of slutty-wit, on a kiddie show to boot. Intelligent too, even with that big hair, I knew they were different. It kind of blew my 1/size of hair = size of brain theory.

That snippet of a segment had me convinced that it was custom-made TV for Trixi. Maybe I didn't get it completely, but I instantly loved BETTY and Ethyl. I didn't see any of them again for quite some time but always kept those images with me.

I flashback again, this time to my job last fall with the *Hartford Advocate*, an "alternative" news and arts weekly. BETTY's *Village Voice* ad for their gig at their "second home," The Ballroom, was the one and only thing pinned up in the dead center of my bulletin board/cubicle wall, directly over my desk. I had an outee cube right next to the water cooler which meant that all the (presumably het) cute women ad reps had to see my stark, sexy, shrine to BETTY on a daily basis. I never went in for that pin-up thing, but BETTY was/is different. Besides, it was also my little way of saying "I like the ladies" without being too overt. Overt was

15 minutes with BETTY, part two

Facing the fear of kibbitzing with your idols



frowned upon in Hartford. So, BETTY helped me laugh and get over a schoolgirl crush, contact the child within, and assist me to come out at work, non-verbally with subtlety and finesse.

But BETTY is also much more than that. BETTY makes me feel, of all things, oh-so-femme. BETTY is a seductress. BETTY is a code word. And if I were to get married, BETTY would be the wonder-gaggle of gals I'd invite to my wedding shower to ooh and aah. BETTY would jump out of the cake. BETTY would be the bridesmaids. BETTY would be the wedding band. BETTY would crash any het, uptight gala affair and send them all reeling into a conga-line in thirty seconds flat.

I want a gal-gang just like BETTY to stand behind me, hands on hips when I look tough and say, "Oh, YEAH?!". I want to be adopted as a BETTY-ette. I want to be the mayo in a BETTY club sandwich. I want to meet BETTY and, yes, be BETTY's friend. Even if I don't entirely get it. Maybe I could be their geek friend.

So, when I first heard that BETTY would be playing in Provincetown this summer, my heart sank. I wanted to keep BETTY precious and special, just like a good, cozy Italian restaurant. I didn't want to share BETTY with average, normal adults. I wanted to keep BETTY all to myself, or at least to myself and the hip dykes and fags with strong N.Y.C. ties.

But then it became even more obvious. BETTY could not be contained. Not even to P-Town. BETTY was to appear at Club Cabaret in Boston for a two-week engagement. I freak when somebody asks me the question: Do I want to interview BETTY?! Fuck yes! But my next thought is, "What am I going to wear?"

I call my music contact pal, asking, "Please, please, please fax me everything you can on BETTY!" One half hour and 26 pages later I've about had it with the litany of mixed musical metaphors to describe this girl band trio. Would I come up with a description that won't annoy or embarrass myself, or worse, alienate BETTY? Hard to say.

So I obsess about the interview and how I want to conduct it. I saw BETTY on *Joan Rivers* a month or so ago. (Even taped it on the tape labeled SANDRA B on L8 NITE. That is *the* special tape kept within inches of the VCR at all times.) I don't want it to be like that: "Why the name, BETTY?" "Who writes what?" "How long has BETTY been BETTY?" "Now, with the new record, things must really be taking off?" "Any terrible experiences?" "How did you three meet?" One of them replied, "On the bus." My favorite Joan question, "Any of you married?" Amy replied, "I'm married to Alyson and Alyson is married to Bitzi." Which sent Joan off on the name "Bitzi, what kind of a name is Bitzi? Your poor mother....," etc.

I resolve that like Carrie Fisher in that gawdawful *Rolling Stone* Madonna interview, I will probably wear black and try to find some sort of a connection. As in a we-have-a-lot-in-common-type interview, but do we? I hear one of you may want to out herself, any takers?

The plan was great in theory. The only thing that went according to program was that I wore black. I had also planned to meet with BETTY before their first Sunday show at Club Cabaret. Something wasn't going well with their sound check and I had to wait. Nervous as hell my mouth went to cotton and the club soda I ordered did nothing but give me the throat gurgles. I had no clue what I would ask them, except for the list of *Tiger Beat*-type questions I had scrawled out.

By the time we sat down, I was told that we would only have 15 minutes to talk before the gals had to be on stage. I was

Continued on page 9

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SURVEYS WILL BE CONDUCTED BETWEEN JUNE 18 AND JULY 2, 1991.

Your participation will be appreciated.

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